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Winona

A Story of Today

By

Ella M. Powell

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

WINONA

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TO-DAY

BY

ELLA M. POWELL

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PREFACE.

MANY of the incidents which form the foundation of this "story of to-day," are true. The conversations between General Sherman, General McPherson, Dr. Shippen and "Aunt Sallie," are verbatim as they occurred in 1864, when the red hills of Georgia were dyed a deeper hue by the blood of war.

Being a child of this later day, and having heard "war times" talked around our Southern firesides since infancy—again having sojourned in the North—from two points of view, I have received my impressions.

ELLA M. POWELL.

WINONA.

CHAPTER I.

A LOW, dark "shanty," stood back a few feet from the country road that led to W——. No expression of life, not even a faint flag of smoke waved from the chimney, to indicate to a passer-by that this humble, solitary abode was inhabited.

A bitter night had set in. The tall trees about the "shanty" rattled and shivered under a sheet of ice. Great gusts of wind, full of weird sounds, spent their passion. A belated horseman rode up to the gate and hallooed. Again and again he called out, but each time his voice was borne away on the wind. It was not until the discouraged man had disappeared behind a hill, on his way, that a long-eared hound cautiously peeped his head from under the house, like a turtle from its shell, gave a few cowardly barks and drew back. Several minutes passed, when the door slowly opened and a faint, mellow light crept out. A lad about fifteen years

of age put his head out, and peered about in the darkness. An elderly man stood back of him holding a tallow candle, the flame of which he endeavored to protect with his hand, but a sudden gust of wind—it was out.

The door closed again, and the two resumed their seats, along with an old woman, around a bed of glowing coals in the big fireplace.

"'Taint likely it's any of 'em; they'll have to be lyin' low t' night, I reckin. This spell 'll about freeze 'em out, and I hope the last one er the plund-'rin' things 'll git frost bit so it 'll last 'em for life," remarked the woman in a tone of revengeful satisfaction, while vigorously stirring with a cob, a skillet of parching corn.

"Ole man, I think it's purty nigh done, and the fire's gittin' low, so you'd better put on another turn o' wood. Don't git any o' them chestnut sticks to have 'em a poppin about and burnin' the tail o' my coat agin. Put on a good, big turn o' that hic'ry an' oak, so it'll last till mornin'. Things 'll have to warm up a bit, or this milk 'll never turn, fur thar aint a sign o' clabber yit."

At this she smoothed her hand down a brown stone jar on the hearth at her side, looked in, then re-tied the cloth over the mouth; knocked the ashes out of her clay pipe and began to refill it. She made an interesting study in her checked home-spun dress, as she sat bent over, with her elbow resting on her knee, smoking. The intervals between

puffs were filled in with—" I aint heered Muly-head low yit ; I jes' know she haint come up ; likely as not, a parcel o' them triflin' gorillas 'ave made beef o' her. That young heifer o' hers 'as got the finest bag I ever seed on a three-year-ole in my life. She 'll give four t' five gallons a day ef she keeps on. I b'lieve ole Brindle 's got the hollow-horn ; this cold spell 's likely t' give it to her. Ef she aint more spritely soon, you'd better be a borin' a hole in her horn, and pourin' in some spirits o' turpentine. I forgot and took hold o' that sore tit o' hers, to-day, and she come nigh kickin' me over. She's the hardest cow to milk anyhow, I ever seed ; never would stand still—come home here last spring with her tail all matted full o' cuckleburs, and switched it aroun' in my face, till my eyes was mighty nigh put out. Law, Master George, yo' taters are roastin' t' death here'n these ashes. I'd forgot all about 'em— By the way, Mr. Giddins, did ye cover up the tater hill with them ole sacks? Some of 'em's frost-bit already. Ye didn't put enough corn-stalks over 'em in the beginnin'. Jes' listen at that wind and sleet slappin' the side o' the house ! It 'll blow every chicken and turkey off'n the roost. The ice on their backs yistiddy mornin' 'peard a quarter o' inch thick, and that ole gobbler's snout 's froze stark stiff. Bein' it's so powerful cold, we'd better pile on a leetle more kiver t'night. Bed kiver's mighty nigh given out too. I've got that "log cabin" quilt 'bout ready fur the frame, so I thought I'd tell Mary

Ann Johnson and Lucindi Tilly, with two or three more o' them in the sittlement, to come over an' we'd have a quiltin' soon's things kinder thaw out a bit. Well, I b'lieve I'll pile in and git up soon in the mornin', fur I want to finish knittin' them blue yarn socks, and card and spin about ten hanks to'ards a counterpin."

These last words came with a thick tongue, for Mrs. Giddings had almost talked herself to sleep, and Mr. Giddings, and young George Hardeman, as well, who were both nodding. Her harmless volley of words never disturbed either their thoughts or slumbers, for they were quite accustomed to them. Mr. Giddings said : "She al'ays did have a way o' talkin' jes' to be a talkin'."

The old woman had just finished putting her pipe away for the night, her last duty before "pilin' in," when there came a sudden, heavy knock on the door. Mr. Giddings sprang to his feet, and reached for the gun that rested on pegs over the doorway. George Hardeman seized a six-shooter from a shelf with one hand ; the other on the door latch ; while Mrs. Giddings nervously re-lighted the tallow candle.

There came another heavy knock, to which George called out : "Who's there?"

"A stranger, sir, that's lost his way and purty nigh froze to death. I'd be mighty grateful ef you'd take me in fur the night, and jes' let me lie on the flo', if nowhars else."

Mr. Giddings, Mrs. Giddings and George debated

the matter under their breath for some moments, while old Trip joined in with a suppressed growl from under the house.

"Come in, sir," at last said George, boldly, opening the door, but all the while keeping his thumb on the cocked trigger of the pistol.

There was an awkward silence and a scrutinizing glance from each at the entrance of the stranger. He was a tall, raw boned man, whose ragged Confederate uniform, with an empty sleeve, war-worn knapsack and canteen, spoke eloquently of deeds of valor passed and suffering present, as he sat shivering and chafing his numb hand before the fire. Some time passed without a word from either of the party, when Mr. Giddings suddenly leaned forward and peered closely into the man's face.

"Bless my soul, ef it taint Billy Simpkins!—honest Billy, as folks uster call ye."

"Well, sho's I'm livin', it's Jim Giddin's!"

Then followed a long, hearty hand-shaking, and various other expressions of recognition and greeting of an original style. Each took a fresh "chaw" of tobacco, and were soon punctuating their friendly conversation and reminiscences with spirts of tobacco juice.

"Well, Jim, I know'd you was in this part o' the country somewhar, but I never thought o' comin' up on ye. I passed here about an hour ago, and hallooed, but no one 'peard to hear me, and as I seed no light about, 'lowed the house was empty.

I rid on a mile or two, when I heered horses' hoofs a gallopin' up behind ; so I turned into the woods a bit. As they passed on, I heerd two men a cussin" and a makin' their threats 'bout puttin' a bullet thro' some un at sight. I knowed they ment me, fur I'd been a dodgin' of 'em fur two or three hours. I'd been told thar was a band o' guerillas 'bout through this sittlement, and 'lowed soon as I seed 'em, they was a part of 'em. It was a stormin' so, I thought I'd better turn back and come 'ere and git under shelter, anyhows till daylight, fur I didn't know how many more of 'em I'd run over fore I could come across a place to stay all night. That's how I lost my road—a tryin' to git out o' their way. I'm a findin' my way to Nashville—tryin' to git back to Georgi— Yes, Jim, I'm goin' back to Georgi ; thar to live and die, I reckin. I knows you're a Union man, Jim, but I tell ye, it's pow'ful hard fur a man that's got any grit in him, to set down and see the cause he knows is right, a suf'rin, and not be able to lend a helpin' hand. I'm a gittin' too old to fight, anyways, they say, but I'd a never giv up till I died, ef I hadn't er lost this arm. Ef I'd er had any say-so in it, I'd er stayed on and peppered the Yankees, with the one I had left, but I fired my last shot at Gettysburg."

"Gettysburg!" interrupted George Hardeman; "why, brother was wounded in that battle—I wonder if you could have known him."

"And what mought yo' name be?"

"George Hardeman, sir; the brother of Dan Hardeman, who was in Pickett's Division under General Longstreet."

"You Dan Hardeman's brother! Why, bless ye, I've been all through the war with Dan Hardeman —him and me was messmates, and I love him same's he was my own. Ye see, I was born and raised in the same sittlement as your paw and Aunt Sallie. Yo' paw an' me was friends long 'fore yo' time. I rickolect when you was born same's twas yistiddy. Arter that, I moved up nigh Roswell, and when I come back, I found yo' paw an' maw both dead— yo' brother Dan and little Sis er livin' with yo' Aunt Sallie, and they told me you was in Tinnessee with a friend o' yo' gran'paw's. I al'ays did like Dan, and when we went t' the war, we went t'gether, leavin' your Aunt Sallie at the big gate, a wipin' her eyes and sayin'—'Good-by' Bill; take care o' yo' sef, and look arter Dan. And I tried to do it; but I had t' give it up at Gettysburg."

Here Mr. Simpkins ceased—gave a long, loud spit-t-o-o-o—shook his head seriously, and then went on:

"Him and me both was wounded at that battle. Somehow, we both had a feelin' somethin' was goin' to happen, fur the night befo', him and me was a settin' in camp by ourselves—jes' settin' thar, sayin' nothin', but thinkin' a powerful lot, when we heerd the rebel yell a soundin' all along, up and down the line. They kep' it up, purty nigh all night, and Dan

an' me sot thar a listenin' and a talkin'. Nigh to'ards day, everything got still's a meetin' house—couldn't see nothin' but the picket guard a treadin' soft's a cat, up and down. Way in the East a little streak o' light riz—made me think o' a white tombstone in a graveyard on a dark night, and I got to feelin' mighty lonesome—reck'n that was the feelin'. At last, Dan, he fell to sleepin', po' feller he was mighty chokin' too, that night; I could tell it by the way he swallowed. I never had no mo' talk with 'im, fur the next day was nigh like Judgment day, sho'. Thar wasn't no talkin' with nobody sich times as them. Ye couldn't hear a word but the commands o' the officers, and the dyin' a callin' on the Lord. The rest had their teeth set and a doin' their best. Sometimes the officers' tongues clove to the roof o' their mouths too, fur I remember that day when things was mighty hot—the bullets was a hissin' an' a peltin' roun' thick as rain—the cannons was a belchin' like fury—the ground was a tremblin', till it made yo' head swim—two or three ammunition wagons busted up, and the smoke come 'er rolling up like hell itself had turned loose—men was thick all 'round, a bleedin'—cussin'—prayin'—groanin'—and their eyes walled back a dyin'. 'Bout that time, Gen'al Longstreet rid up on his charger, and Pickett said: 'Gen'al, shall I advance?' and the Gen'al jest looked at him pow'ful solemn, and bowed his head—couldn't say a word. Pickett led on and made a good fight too, even if he did have

to give it up. Shortly arter that, I fell wounded. They picked me up and took me to the field hospital, and while I was a lyin' thar, suff'rin' mightly, I saw 'em puttin' Dan in the ambulance. I tried to crawl to him, but I couldn't make it; so I waved my hand, and the ambulance stopped in a few feet o' me, jest long enough to say good-by. Ye know Dan's a likely fellow—kaint none o' 'em beat him on looks, but he looked mighty pitiful a lyin' thar. 'Good-by, Mr. Simpkins,' he said, 'ef you live and I don't, tell 'em to kiss little Sis, and, think kindly o' me, and remember all I've told ye.' Then, they drove on, but I don't know whar."

Here, the old man broke down and young George sobbed like a child. Mrs. Giddings brushed the tears away, and poked the fire, while Mr. Giddings got up with his hands in his pockets, in a meditative way, and went for a drink of water. For some time there was silence. At last, George Hardeman spoke:

"Mr. Simpkins," he said, "will you do a favor for me?"

"Ef it's in my power, son, I will."

"Well, you know I'm living with the Colonel over at W——, a rich man. I would go to the war myself, if the Colonel would let me—he says I'm too young, but I know how to level a gun if I am. The other day, four of these guerillas around here, fell on to the Colonel, and were about to shoot him, when his wife ran out and threw herself between

him and the scoundrels. One of them threatened to shoot her too, if she didn't leave, but she clung the closer about the Colonel's neck—the tears streaming down her pretty face—her long hair falling in masses of golden curls, down her back. I could stand it no longer. There was no one at the house but me, and I felt in a moment that everything depended on my efforts. I had just returned from hunting, and my gun was loaded. I took good aim from behind a cedar tree—there were four against two, and one of the two unarmed you know. I put one load right through the temple of the man who was making his threats, killing him instantly; the other load wounded another man, so that he died several hours after. The remaining two spurred their horses and run, firing back bullets and oaths as they went. Since that affair, several of their band have been seen scouting about here, and as it got out through the settlement that I did the shooting, the Colonel thinks they are after me, and insisted that I should come over here to Mr. Giddings' for awhile, as he is a Union man, and I would be better protected, though they are generally no respecters of persons. I didn't want to come—looked cowardly to me, but the Colonel still insisted, and made me. I would be dying in a good cause, if I died killing such villains. Both the Colonel and his wife have never ceased to talk of their gratefulness, though they think I was pretty daring, and the other day made me a present of a

young filly of the famous "Lightfoot" breed, that he brought out from Kentucky. Now, Mr. Simpkins, I want to send that filly to little sister, and I want you to take it to her."

In several days, after a pleasant sojourn with his old friend Mr. Giddings, Mr. Simpkins and "Mett" —the filly—set out for Georgia.

CHAPTER II.

"I TELL ye, Miss Sallie, she sets the saddle pow'ful well fur a youngster."

"Yes, Mr. Simpkins, Winona is an unusual child anyway. I don't know what we would do without her sweet little face and cunning ways. She has been such a comfort to me since the men folk left. I am so glad George sent Mett to her—a finer horse I never saw, and well named, too, for she is mettle to the bone. Should any one steal her, they will have no trouble in finding her name from the mark I see you have given her; but don't you think you had better be off, Mr. Simpkins? The sun is getting very warm, and they may stop grinding soon."

Mr. Simpkins flung his sack of corn over his horse's back, mounted, then started off, side by side with little Winona, towards Mason's Mill. At the branch, they stopped to water the horses, when Mett, with a horse's keen perception, suddenly raised her head with pricked ears, and began to shy.

"Oh, Mr. Simpkins, see, it's old Jake! he'll catch us, oh—oh—oh!" exclaimed Winona in a frightened, childish undertone, ready to burst into tears.

"Don't be afeered, Honey—he'll not bother ye; he's nothin' but a sneakin' coward nohow—al'ways a skulkin' about in these woods round here, or lyin' drunk. A little, old, shriveled up Jew, with a gold ring in his ear, kaint mean much good to this honest sittlement. Don't know what he come here fur anyhows; been roun' here sometime now and nobody knows no more 'bout him than when he first come—jes' know he's ole Jake, the rag-picker, with a peach of a daughter. Daughter! umph! don't believe it neither. Well, he'd better never come a meddlin' round me, fur I'll do some work with this one arm here."

And so Mr. Simpkins went on, subduing his inward contempt with an outward volley of words, until the strange dwarf of a man had, for the time, passed out of sight—then out of mind. In the mean time, Aunt Sallie had busied herself with housework, and now sat on the front porch, leisurely stringing beans for dinner. It was the nineteenth of July, 1864. All about there was such a lazy, hot expression. The shimmering heat rose from the baking earth and sweltered every living thing. Not a sound was to be heard except an occasional stridulous note of the July fly, or lonely chirp of a grasshopper. Mr. Simpkins and Winona returned ere long, with the fresh ground meal. The child, exhausted from her jaunt, and the fright from old Jake, soon fell asleep on the big walnut bed.

"I fear she has overdone herself," Aunt Sallie

murmured, as she bent over and kissed the little pale brow.

Cindy, one of the blackest darkiès that Africa ever produced, and one of the best-hearted, kept time to the "ker-slush, ker-slosh, ker-slish" of her churn-dasher, with a weird and almost barbaric strain, from the shed. She hushed suddenly. Even the grasshopper and the July fly retired; perhaps for their daily siesta. Indeed, all nature seemed to hold her breath for a time over that peaceful country-home. The stillness became oppressive. Was it woman's intuition or premonition, that made Aunt Sallie go quickly to the edge of the porch, and look out from behind the wilted morning-glory vines with a feeling of—"something is going to happen!" All that was to be seen was a lone buzzard, careening along the blue horizon, as stately and still as a ship at sea. Aunt Sallie stood gazing vacantly, her thoughts far away with her loved ones from whom she was separated by the bloody hand of war, when a mounted courier dashed up to the gate—waved his hand and shouted: "The Yankees are coming!" —turned and was gone. Like an alarm of fire to a sound sleeper at midnight, came that cry to Aunt Sallie. She stood for a moment stunned, feeling as if the man had struck her with a club upon the head. Only for a moment she stood, then, rallying all her reserve force, hastened to reach a large horn and blow several vigorous blasts. Of all the darkies on the plantation, Cindy was the trustworthy one.

With her assistance Aunt Sallie gathered a few valuables and provisions, and proceeded to hide them in the "dungeon." This "dungeon," as Aunt Sallie termed it, was merely the space between the flat ceiling and slanting roof of the front piazza. It was used as a storage place for broken furniture, old clothes and such things as "might come in some day." She filled in the "skuttle hole" as well as possible, to keep it from being detected, and hastened down-stairs just in time to see the Yankees advancing through the orchard. The horn blasts had brought the darkies from the field, and at the sight of the army, they took to their cabins in great confusion. In less than five minutes, the yard was crowded with soldiers, and the house was taken possession of by General Sherman and his entire staff as his headquarters.

The Confederates, in the mean time, had advanced to meet the foe, and skirmishing immediately commenced. Aunt Sallie took Winona in her arms—the child having waked with a high fever—and sat down near General Sherman on the back shed. Cindy followed and crouched at the side of her mistress, half crazed with fear. The General and his men viewed the group with curiosity, but not a word was exchanged, until when Winona asked for water. Aunt Sallie went to the pail, which sat on a shelf just outside the shed, and as she was in the act of lifting the gourd to the little parched lips, a bullet whizzed by, severing it from its handle.

"Pretty close clipping, eh?" indifferently remarked General Sherman.

"Rather," Aunt Sallie replied, with assumed calmness, resuming her seat.

"Don't you think you had better get inside your shanty?"

At the word "shanty," Aunt Sallie's cavalier blood began to boil, but having always been taught there was one thing a lady was bound to keep—her temper—she gave a big swallow and replied carelessly, "Oh, no; if you are safe here, I reckon we will be also," with emphasis on the you.

"Where is your husband?" he went on.

Here, Aunt Sallie hesitated, looking him straight in the eye; then in a most deliberate manner said: "He is from home to-day, like you, sir."

This repartee brought a significant smile all around, while General Sherman picked up a newspaper and began reading. General McPherson, who had been a silent spectator of what had passed, walked over, and taking Winona's hand caressingly in his, said, "The little one dosn't seem to be quite well."

His tone, his manner, shot a bolt into Aunt Sallie's breast, and though it came from the enemy, it was not one of antagonism, but one that brought the tears to her eyes, for she felt that he was a gentleman.

"Yes, I fear she is going to be ill, having been exposed to the sun so much to-day, and then she has such a nervous temperament and easily excited," Aunt Sallie replied in a friendly tone.

The child, hearing herself discussed, looked wonderingly at the strangers a moment, then proceeded to an informal introduction.

"My name is Winona, but Banni calls me "Noni" for short. A Yankee lady named me—a good Yankee—not one who fights. Did you ever see a Yankee?" she innocently prattled.

"Oh, yes," was General McPherson's good natured answer.

"A fighting one?"

"Yes."

"And didn't you run?"

"No."

Winona regarded him curiously with wide opened eyes. Meditating a moment she went on: "My Sunday-school book says, God made you and me, Aunt Sallie, and all good people; but I don't know who made fighting Yankees. I reckon Mr. Lincoln and the bad man did it, don't you?"

General McPherson laughed heartily and lifted Winona to his knee, when, to the merriment of the whole party, she began singing in a sweet childish voice:

"Jeff Davis is a clever man—
Old Lincoln is a fool—
Jeff Davis rides a milk-white horse—
Old Lincoln rides a mule.
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! for the bonnie blue flag;
Hurrah! Hurrah! for the bonnie blue flag,
That bears a single star."

At the end, there was a burst of applause, to which Winona shyly hung her head, while toying with the brass buttons on the General's coat, and said—"I always charge Uncle John a nickel when I sing."

"And who is Uncle John?" he replied.

"Why, he's Aunt Sallie's John, and my uncle; but they come and took him and brother Dan away off to the war, and left us all by ourselves. Aunt Sallie cries and cries, but they won't come back, and I don't have nobody to give me nickels to buy stick candy with now."

Here Winona rested her little tired head against the General's breast. He nestled her closely—took a silver quarter from his pocket, and placed it in her hand—leaned over and kissed her. By this time, the bullets had begun to whiz on all sides. Thicker and faster they came, making the leaves of the massive oaks round the house to fall in great numbers. All conversation ceased, and desperate work commenced. General Thomas' Artillery had advanced and was pouring shot and shell into the ranks of the Confederates, that caused them to begin to give way. The sky, so serene and blue but a short while before, was now covered by a boiling cloud of sullen gray. General Sherman wore an anxious expression, and was heard to say, "If they give way *here*, I'm satisfied." But a little while, and his hopes were realized. It often takes but a moment for desperate men to do the work of years. The Confeder-

ates were compelled to fall back after the heaviest fighting, since leaving Kennesaw Mountain. They had lost the battle of Peachtree Creek. Things became more quiet. The thick veil of smoke was slowly lifted from the faces of the bloody dead and dying, revealing a most pitiful spectacle. Everywhere was such a naked, forlorn expression. Trees were stripped of their limbs and foliage; fences down, and grass, flowers and herbs trampled to the earth. As many of the wounded as could be accommodated, were placed upon the floor of the front piazza, these quarters being at the same time used by Dr. Shippen, surgeon of Haskell's division, Twenty-third Corps, for the purpose of a hospital. The genial doctor approached Aunt Sallie most courteously, and asked if she would be kind enough to give him some old cloths for bandages; their supply having run short.

"Certainly, sir," was her prompt reply, and she proceeded to gather every thing in her possession that could be utilized for that purpose and gave to him. Even some of her new sheets and table-linen were torn into strips to alleviate suffering; the dining table itself being used for the surgeon's operating table.

Winona's fever rose higher and higher under the excitement and thundering noise, and when, at last, Aunt Sallie had to explain to her that it was the Yankees and the war, she clung pitifully first to her, then to Cindy, trembling like a little, innocent

hunted animal. Her nausea soon became so great that she had to give up, and take to her bed.

"Why, what is the matter, little one?" said Dr. Shippen, seeing her lying there so still.

"Oh, sir, the big guns hurt me here," she answered, placing both her hands to her throat.

"Ah, there are many strong men out there in front, whose hearts are in their mouths too," seriously replied the doctor, sitting down on the side of the bed, and feeling her pulse. In a moment he turned to Aunt Sallie saying, "Madame, you have here a very sick child. While I am here, I'm at your service, and will do all I can for her."

Before Aunt Sallie had time to express her gratitude, a soldier stepped up to the back door and called her hurriedly: "Madame," he said, "the men are tearing down your barn and out-houses. I think a word from you to General Sherman would save them—" tipped his cap and was gone.

She hesitated a moment, not liking to approach the General, then walked to the front piazza, where he was sitting with his hands in his pockets, legs crossed, and with a morose expression, was abstractly inspecting the toe of his carpet-bag slipper, a pair of which he wore at the time.

Aunt Sallie cleared her throat to steady her voice and said: "General Sherman, I see your men are tearing down my barn and out-houses; it is little to them, but much to me and my family. Won't you be good enough to have it stopped?"

Without once changing his expression, or raising his eyes from the toe of his slipper, he answered abruptly—"Madame, I have too large a family to look after to-day, to bother with yours."

General McPherson was sitting by, reading a paper, which he dropped upon the floor, and rising, said, in a reproachful tone—"Tut—tut—tut—General, we are in this lady's house, and she has done all she could to relieve the sufferings of our men."

General McPherson then walked to the edge of the porch, and in a loud voice called out: "Come to the front like white men; not like dogs! Forward—march!" and ordered every man outside the yard.

"God bless you!" were all the words Aunt Sallie could find to say, as she turned into the house, leaving General Sherman whittling a stick with his pocket-knife, without having replied a word to General McPherson or his command.

As the day wore on, General Sherman gave the order, "Go ahead! tear up every railroad, and pull down every telegraph pole in your reach!" Strictly to the command his army took up, slowly but surely, its ever memorable devastating march. The wounded were expeditiously removed, leaving behind a melange of amputated limbs, which were gathered up and unceremoniously pitched into a gully, without even a show of interment.

"Much depends on good nursing, whether you

will save her or not ; more in that than in the medicine in cases of fever, you know," said Dr. Shippen, as he gave Aunt Sallie his hand in a sympathetic good-by. She followed him to the door, and looked after him through her tears.

"Let me see too, Aunt Sallie—please, ma'am, let me see," came a weak, childish voice to her.

"Yes, my darling, you shall see ; for he is a good man, and has done all he could—he has left some medicine to make you well."

Aunt Sallie lifted Winona's light form in her arms and walked to the open door-way. Dr. Shippen was just disappearing at the top of the hill. It was not at him the child eagerly gazed, but at two mounted soldiers who were at that moment passing the gate; one of whom was leading an unsaddled horse by a rope about its neck.

"Mett! Mett! come back, Mett! Oh, Aunt Sallie, they are taking my Mett," cried Winona, with all her feeble strength, as if her little heart were breaking at the sight. Mett seemed to hear the childish pleadings and understand, for she turned her head—the thin nostrils quivering—looked back longingly, and gave a piteous neigh.

"Can't Dr. Shippen, or the good man who gave me the money, bring her back, Aunt Sallie? Let Cindy run and tell them, please, ma'am!"

"Yes, run, Cindy, and try to overtake the doctor; tell him it is all I ask; just to have Mett sent back. Tell him she's Winona's pet—run!" commanded

Aunt Sallie, excitedly; but the frightened negro only crouched closer in the corner, calling on the Lord in frenzied mutterings. Aunt Sallie impatiently put Winona on the bed, and started in a bold run towards the men, shouting for them to "Stop, stop!" as she went. They realized the situation at a glance, and in order to save themselves the bother of a scene, laughingly quickened their pace, and were soon out of sight. Out of breath, Aunt Sallie sat down on a log by the roadside and wept bitterly. Only for a moment did she give way to her feelings, for a pang of anxiety and a touch of bitterness choked back her words, and crisped the tear on her cheek into a deeper and more eloquent sorrow, expressed only by the lines of her face and heavy heart throbs. This last excitement quickened Winona's fever into a wild delirium. Frequently she would caress the pillow, and talk to her pet as if stroking Mett's glossy mane. About sundown a detachment of stragglers from the rear of the army came up boldly, walked in without a word, and commenced ransacking the house. They appropriated everything they could conveniently take away with them, without the slightest compunction of conscience. Aunt Sallie knew she was powerless to prevent them, and made no effort in that direction until two of them, more insolent than the others, sat down in the room where she was nursing Winona and began tantalizing her with disagreeable talk.

"Got anything to eat here?" peremptorily spoke out one, with a regular down-eastern twang, rolling his "r" like a sweet morsel under his tongue, with which he was loth to part.

"There's nothing for you," was the evasive answer.

A harsh expression and tone was the man's as he said; "Ah, there isn't; well, of course, we take your word for it, but we will just look about to make sure;" at which he and his companion began upsetting everything in the room. A wooden box, used for holding chips and light wood, had been hurriedly upturned to conceal part of a boiled ham at the side of the fireplace. A kick from one of them knocked it aside, leaving the ham exposed. He picked it up with a spiteful, "Umph, humph!" and held it before Aunt Sallie. She had been fanning Winona, seemingly indifferent to their doings. She stopped, looked straight at the man, saying, "When I said there was nothing here for you I meant it. That is my meat, and when you eat it, I want you to have the consolation of knowing that you are swallowing the very life's blood of me and mine. Your army has, in this one day, swept from us the earnings of years. Our barns, fields and cupboards are stripped of every vestige of food. That is the last morsel of meat that we have."

"Give her the d—— thing, and come on," the second man spoke up, swearing at the very thought of his better nature having been touched by Aunt

Sallie's words. The first man dropped the ham, but leisurely took a seat, not satisfied with the thought of being gotten rid of so easily. He took a photograph from his pocket and placed it in Aunt Sallie's lap, determined to draw her into a conversation.

"That's my wife—what do you think of it?" he questioned.

She looked at the likeness with curiosity, to see what style of unfortunate woman could have selected such a ruffian for a husband.

"All I have to say is, that if my husband is in her house to-day, as you are in mine, rest assured that she is being treated with respect."

He, in turn, took the picture and looked at it without a word. There must have been something in the expression, together with Aunt Sallie's quiet reproach that touched him at last, for he got up and followed his companion out.

So red was the twilight sky, that it seemed, like a mirror, to be reflecting the bloody earth. An angel from the throne bent down—caught the last long ray of the setting sun for a golden wand, and with it, lighted the evening star,—a taper over the bier of the slain, while the mists of the night gently draped themselves as their winding sheet. The moon rose clear, and shed a mellow, holy light. So balmy was the air—so serene was nature, that to many troubled hearts, it seemed almost a mockery. To the dead, it was a peaceful benediction.

Though it made the house close and hot, Aunt Sallie had bolted and barred securely every door and window, except one small high window at the side of the chimney that looked out to the west.

Uncle Sam and Cindy were palleted in the little room that opened into Aunt Sallie's, as an apology for protection. The former was snoring away vociferously, and judging from the occasional grimaces of his black countenance, he must have been in his dreams, riding the promised mule over the forty acres of ground, with which the Yankees had tickled his credulity, if he would go with them. He whispered it as an inducement to Cindy just before going to sleep, but he soon found it would take a stronger attachment for him, and something more than an enticing promise to get her to desert her mistress.

"No, sah, I ain't lubin' you so pow'ful hard nohows, and I ain't gwine speculatin' roun' dis country 'dout I knowed fur sartin whar I wus gwine t' lan'. Missus been good to me, and I ain't gwine t' forsook her now, an' ef I's freed, I'll jes' stay right hiah long as Missus does. Lots o' dem niggers dat's done gone away 'll come back fo' long er wishin' dey nebber had er went; now, you see ef dey don't."

Here Uncle Sam gave Cindy a nudge in the side, a signal to hush, as her tone of voice was rising perceptibly with the heat of the conversation, and he feared Aunt Sallie would hear them. Not that

she could prevent his going or would try, but in his heart he felt "sheepish" about it.

The weary night hours dragged on, while Aunt Sallie faithfully kept watch at Winona's bedside. There was nothing for her to do but think, hope, and pray. Now that everything was so still, she began to realize fully her situation—her loneliness and peril. To whom could she go for help? It was dangerous to try to get to the Major, who lived about a half mile from her on the road to Decatur —her nearest neighbor. Cut off from Atlanta and her father, who lived there, there was absolutely no help, unless Providence would interpose,—surrounded by the Federal army, without food, unprotected from the insults of wicked men. Five or six of the darkies had gone with the army, while the remaining ones were in a demoralized state. With these thoughts rushing in wild confusion through her brain, she began to pace restlessly between Winona and the window; the window and Winona. The dull light from the tallow candle threw sombre shadows about the bed of the little suffering form. As Aunt Sallie bent over eagerly to listen to her breathings that came so irregularly, her heart was filled with a terrible foreboding of death. The horrors of the day were for a time, lost in the anxiexty of the moment. She dropped on her knees at the side of the bed, clasped her hands and began praying aloud most fervently. Her voice waked Cindy, who, hearing her mistress calling on the Lord, was seized with a fresh fright,

and began joining in the supplication, by spasmodically repeating Aunt Sallie's words. As Aunt Sallie would say, "Oh, God, our heavenly Father," Cindy would sing out, in a weird monotonous strain, with a sudden, "Yes! Oh, G-o-o-o-d, our heavenly F-a-a-a-ther," and then go on humming a barbaric-like accompaniment to the end of the prayer. The amen had scarcely passed Aunt Sallie's lips, and while she still knelt, there was a noise outside the open window, as if some one was climbing up. She rose and tipped stealthily to peep out. Just underneath the window, a man was carefully propping a plank against the house, to serve as a ladder.

"Who's there?" called out Aunt Sallie, with a steady voice.

The man stopped his work, and looked up as if a bit startled. By the moonlight falling on his upturned face, she recognized him to be one of the men who had been through the house plundering that day, and who evidently thought she was quite unprotected. He made no reply to her question, but continued to adjust the plank.

What is your business here?"

Again he made no answer. Aunt Sallie turned quickly, and seeing a hatchet lying on the hearth where Uncle Sam had been splitting light wood, she seized it.

"You dastard! if you dare attempt to come through this window I will drive this hatchet into

your brain! I have stood enough and am now ready to defend myself, even to death!"

The man stood still at her daring words, muttering something about "being spunky," and feeling as if he had suddenly been plunged into a cold bath. As he was hesitating, Aunt Sallie called to Uncle Sam, saying, in a determined way, "Sam, bring me that loaded gun."

It was impossible for the man to hold on to a weapon and climb at the same time; he realized the advantage of Aunt Sallie's position, and hearing a man's name called, and the shuffling of Uncle Sam's and Cindy's clumsy feet, he jumped the garden fence and was soon out of sight.

"Oh, the torture of such suspense!" thought Aunt Sallie; "what if the demon should return and set fire to the house! Oh, if Winona should die before the day, I would not even have so much as a pine box to bury her in. Oh, God, have mercy—have mercy!"

And so the night wore on. Never did Aunt Sallie listen so eagerly for the crowing of the chickens, or welcome so heartily the first ray of dawn. As soon as it was light, she sent Uncle Sam to pick up the scattered corn, dropped by the army, to grind for bread—it was her only resort. Several hours passed, and still Uncle Sam did not return. Aunt Sallie walked to the piazza to see if she could see him coming, just as a horseman dashed up to the gate. She could scarcely believe her own eyes

as she recognized in him no less than the good Dr. Shippen. In her warm, impulsive, Southern way, she extended both hands to him, saying feelingly; "Thank God!"

The fervor in those two words, the sore distressed expression of her face, and her womanliness of manner, touched a sympathetic chord in the good man's heart, causing the tears to rush to his eyes.

"Business brought me near here," he said, "so I thought I would run down and see how my little patient is;" then he sat down and commenced feeling Winona's pulse. "She is still very ill, but I think by following closely my instructions, you will save her. Give frequent baths of diluted brandy and soda, and this medicine. When she is strong enough to take nourishment, give her boiled milk and rice."

"Oh, I thank you sincerely, doctor, and will follow as faithfully as I can, your directions; but I have no brandy or rice, and our last cow was driven away about daybreak this morning. I think they must have her penned somewhere just over the hill yonder, for I've heard her lowing several times today."

The doctor poured some brandy from a canteen, saying: "I guess the quartermaster has your cow —I'll call by and see, and leave orders for you to have milk and rice as long as he is stationed there. I wish, dear madame, it were in my power to do more for you, but—" Here he extended his hand

to Aunt Sallie to say farewell—"such is the result of war."

She took his hand cordially, gratefully, feeling that he was a man in truth serving the cause he believed to be right; at the same time having a respect for the feelings of others, and a sympathetic heart for unprotected women and children.

As he turned to the door, Winona having been awakened by their conversation, pleaded feebly, "Bring her back; please bring her back."

"Her pet horse, Mett, was taken yesterday," Aunt Sallie explained, "and in her delirium, she calls constantly for her."

Dr. Shippen hesitated a moment, gave a last glance at the little sufferer, the tears again dimming his eyes—tipped his hat and went out without a word.

CHAPTER III.

It was the twenty-second of July, about sundown, three days after the fighting about Aunt Sallie's, that a courier stopped and asked her for a dipper of water.

"We have had a great loss to-day," he remarked sadly, shaking his head. Seeing that he was friendly inclined and somewhat distressed, Aunt Sallie replied, "How is that?"

"General McPherson was killed to-day in the battle of Atlanta."

"O—o—o—h, Oh! a good man gone; he was surely a friend to me a few days ago, and I shall never cease to respect his name. How did it happen?"

"The road to Blair's Line had been clear, when he started full tilt to reach it. About a hundred yards run him short into the skirmishing line of Cleburne, coming up through a gap. They called to him to surrender, but he just raised his hat, as if about to salute—turned to gallop away, when a volley was fired, and he fell to the ground. He was lying there alone, his staff scattered carrying orders. An orderly was close by, but he, too, was

wounded and captured. I had just been shot in this left arm, and was lying behind a log in sight of the place where the General fell. I happened to look up just as he threw his hand convulsively to his head, and in a second he was down. I crawled along in some bushes, managing in that way to escape and tell the terrible news. My wound necessitates my falling back for a few weeks, and as it isn't serious, I was commissioned to Roswell, with some orders in regard to his remains. When I came in sight of your house, I remembered overhearing the General talking very kindly about you the other day when we were here. He seemed to take a great fancy to your little girl; said, 'If she lives, she will be a great woman.'"

When Aunt Sallie turned into the house, it was with those words repeating themselves in her ears—"if she lives, she will be a great woman." At that moment, Cindy entered saying, "Missus, Rag Jake am out dar, an wants fur to kno' ef you have seed his daughter anywhars 'round hiah. Says he haint seed nothin'o' her since de day o' de fightin' when he run out an' hid in de woods, and when he come back yistiddy, she was done gone. He kaint fine 'er no-whars, lowd he thought mebbe she mought 'ave come up hiah, as 'twas sich skeery times."

"No, Cindy, I have seen nothing of her. Indeed, I've seen no one pass except a man and woman in a one mule buggy about dusk the day after the battle. They were driving rapidly, and neither of them

turned their heads. As the woman wore a quaker bonnet, it was impossible for me to see her face," was Aunt Sallie's reply.

"Well, I'll go and tell 'im what ye says. I jes' bet dat gal done gone an' run away fum him, and I don't blame her neider—dey says he beats her like er ox sometimes. He aint nothin' but po' white trash—I don't like his looks noways, and he's al'ays a sneekin' and a meddlin' round hiah dese days. He'd better be tendin' to his own business. Ast me one day ef you alls wus rich, and which ov de men folks wus worth de moist. I jes' tole him, I didn't know nothin' 'bout it, and turned and lef' him a mutterin' cuss words. I reck'n his gal done caught de freedom fever like Sam—khe—he—he. Ole Sam, he done gone fur good—yaas Lord, an I bet dat nigger 'll wish he wus back hiah many a time fo' he dies. An' whars Mr. Simpkins, missus, he done gone agin?"

"Indeed, I don't know where he is, Cindy, for he received a message from father asking him to come hurriedly to Atlanta, on important business, the morning of the fight here. He had scarcely gotten out of sight, when the courier came telling that the Yankees were coming. Of course, he is cut off by the army now, and I don't know when he will be back."

In the mean time, Winona's fever was slowly abating, and Aunt Sallie's hopes strong for her recovery. Another week passed, when one morning, just at

daybreak, there came a rap at the back door. Aunt Sallie's heart sank within her at the thought of another scene, like those through which she had recently passed; but, to her great delight there came in answer to her question—"Who's there?" Mr. Simpkins' familiar voice. She threw open the door and almost embraced him, so overjoyed was she at the sight of a friend. He handed her a letter; it was from her dear husband and full of earnest prayers for her safety, and hopes for their meeting on earth once more. "No news from Dan," she said, wiping her eyes and putting the letter back into the envelope.

"None yit, but don't give up, Miss Sallie; he may turn up all right in the end."

"Where are mother and father? Are they safe and well?"

"Oh, they's all right; that's jest what I've come t' tell ye. I had a mighty tough time a gittin' here too. You see, I was cut off, and no way to git through the line, unless I went miles out o' the way, and run a risk then; so I jest made up my mind to try it bold. I come out at night, and crawled along in the bresh as nigh as I could, for the picket guard not to see and hear me. I kinder slid down in a little gully that was purty thick with blackberry bushes. They was mighty sticky, but I managed to hold out for two nights an' a day, when a man come along on horseback, and walked right over me. One of the horses' hoofs kinder

bruised this leg o' mine, but I didn't groan a word, for I heerd the guard say: "Who comes thar?" The man said, "A friend, with the countersign." "Advance and give the countersign," said the guard. I tell you I had both ears open and caught it too. I laid thar mighty nigh till daybreak, when I found my chance—give the countersign and walked through same's their own men. Risky business though, I tell ye. Well now, 'bout yo' paw. You'll be amazed to know him and your maw's done refigeed 'way down on Yaller river. They heerd the Yankees was a comin', so they jest piled some truck in the wagins, took the niggers and got out o' their reach. Now, your paw tole me to bring you this letter, and to tell you to pack up in a wagin, and come and bring Winona here and some of the niggers down whar they is, so you can be keered for. I tole him I'd do my best t' git t' ye, and that I'd stay here and take care o' the house the best I could for ye. I'm willin' t' do anything I can for the old man an hisn, for I tell ye, thar's mighty few like him. He's been tendin' on me and my folks goin' on ten year now, and never charged me a cent."

"But, Mr. Simpkins, it will be impossible for me to go. Winona has been very ill, and is still quite feeble; it would be dangerous to move her. Then John writes me that he is trying to get a furlough, and if he succeeds may be at home any time. I would not for the world have him come and find the

house empty. No, I tell you the better plan: so soon as Winona is strong enough, it will be best for her to go, for father can give her medical attention, should she again get sick, and we are living on the mere scraps of food gathered here and there—half the time not knowing where the next meal is to come from. If it had not been for some dried fruit left over from last season that was stored away in the dungeon, and had been forgotten, I don't know what would have become of us. Then we make a good pot of lye hominy now and then, out of the scattered corn we pick up; but I don't know how long this is to last, so I think you had better go with Winona. I will stay and keep the darkies that are left with me. Cindy I know, will be faithful. Banni can go with you to look after Winona."

Days passed. "Cindy," said Aunt Sallie one morning, "I want you to try and get to the Major's to-day to see if they are all dead or alive up there. I've heard nothing from them for some time now."

Cindy began to tremble and moan at the thought of for one hour untying herself from her mistress' apron string, and venturing out. To go or not to go was the question with her, as she stood fumbling with the corner of her apron, and gazing up the road she had been requested to take.

"Oh, missus," she cried, clapping her hands for joy, "dar he come now, fo' de Lord, dar come de Major, walkin' down de road!"

Sure enough it was the Major.

"What is it—something has happened," said Aunt Sallie, as she advanced to greet him and saw the sad expression on his face. He sat down, took off his hat, and began wiping the perspiration from his brow without having uttered a word.

"I will tell you," he said, sighing audibly, after a moment's hesitation. "Dan Hardeman is"— here he hesitated again.

"Dead!" Aunt Sallie finished.

The Major only nodded his head in assent. When Aunt Sallie had sufficiently recovered from the first paroxysm of grief, the Major said, "I will tell you all about it, word for word as it happened. I was returning home from Atlanta, as usual, from my work, when just as I got to the house, I saw the Southern army hastily retreating; there was a promiscuous destruction going on of everything that could be of value to the invading army. I realized in a moment, that I could not remain there under such circumstances. Ah, Sallie, I had a sad heart as I called my wife and children around me, and said good-by, promising to come back my first opportunity. I determined to make that opportunity as soon as possible, and, for that purpose, went immediately to General Hood at his headquarters, and asked permission to enter the Federal lines, protected by such scouts as he had. General Wheeler's command being stationed on the right of the Confederate army, and immediately in front of my home,

I presented my permit to him, explaining my situation. I was then consigned to the scouts of the Texas Rangers, with instructions to aid me in penetrating the lines. Being familiar with all the paths of the country around here, I determined to run the gauntlet. I waited until night, when I stealthily made my way to the woods. I came up, my heart beating pretty fast, at the corner, of the potato patch, and was in hailing distance of the house, when I stumbled over a wire stretched across the road. The noise I made in falling, brought the sentinel to his 'present arms!' He gave the command, 'Halt! Who comes there?' I promptly replied, 'A friend unarmed, seeking the shelter of his home.' I was permitted to pass on. As I approached my own door, everything was still as death, and not a light to be seen. The quiet and the darkness of the night gave the white sides of the house a spectre like expression, making me think of a vault in some lonely graveyard. On entering I learned the true condition of affairs. I found our house constituted a part of the temporary breastworks of the army, with a probability of being the location of an active battle the next day. Once more I turned my steps to the woods, asking God, in His tender mercy, to be with mine until we met again. I was almost out of sight, when an owl set up its doleful hooting in a tree near me. I turned with superstitious dread and looked back, wondering if I would ever see my old home again. But con-

solation came to me in the words: 'Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.' I resumed my connection with the Texas Ranger Scouts, and in that way had the privilege of frequently hearing from the front; but only to learn of the extreme destitution in which my family were left. I often thought of you, for I knew you, too, were suffering. I was led to desperation, and determined, this time, to see in person, and bring my family out, if possible. To do so, I boldly advanced in daylight along the main highway, passing first the sentinels of the Confederate army, who examined the extraordinary permit I held, bid me pass on, hoping that nothing would molest me. On nearing the house, I encountered the Federal Advance Guard. They were in my yard drinking water at the well. Without much effort, I convinced them of my exemption from active military duty, and was permitted to enter the house. My beard and hair, from neglect, had grown long. To protect the only pair of pants I possessed, I tucked them into my boot legs, making me to look like a full fledged woodsman. This naturally attracted the attention of the commanding officer, who reported my presence at home, and charged me with being a bushwhacker, and a dangerous man. The next day, a mounted Irish corporal came down the road and halted at the gate."

"'Halloh!'" he called out, "'is the mon of the house at hum?'"

"'Here I am,'" said I. "'Sir, what will you have?'"

"'Faith, and I'll have nathin', sir,'" said he; "'tek the road to headquarthers and the Generil will tell ye what he'll have with ye.'"

"'You'll permit me to make myself more presentable for the General, won't you?'" I went on.

"'The devil,'" he answered; "'strike the grit and be quick about it.'"

"In a lively trot on foot, about five paces before the horse, and corporal, with a drawn pistol in his hand, I proceeded to the headquarters of the army. The general in command met me pleasantly, and with the flattering statement, that I was represented to him as a man of intelligence, and perfectly familiar with the entire country around here. He expressed himself as glad to have the opportunity of conferring with me in regard to certain roads and by-ways lying east of my home, and approaching the fortifications of Atlanta. To this I replied: 'General, if this is your object, you have certainly encountered the wrong man, and although I regret the necessity of the present war, yet I am in entire sympathy with the Southern cause. I cannot, under any circumstances, aid our enemies.' 'This, sir,' he said, 'only confirms the good reputation you bear in this country, and but elevates you in my estimation. It is so different from the crouching, submissive men I sometimes meet, pretending friendship for policy's sake. How is it, sir, that you are not in the

army?' I answered, 'It is not necessary to go into details, as you will understand from this document which I present, that I am considered of more importance here in following my regular business, than I could possibly be bearing arms. It is not of my own choice, but the will of my country that I remain at home; and as long as I can render preferred service here, I will do so.' 'But,' he went on, 'your cause is hopeless; why not go where you can be in peace and with your family? I am prepared to send you North, out of this trouble, and to a country where you can manage to keep the wolf from the door; and when this war is over you can then return to your native clime.' 'General,' I replied, 'I thank you very kindly for your many personal compliments, and your offer to carry us to the rear. This is my home, my country, and my destinies are with it for "weal or woe." To it I owe my allegiance; duty demands my return to my regular avocation, which is of such a nature that the government under which I am living considers my services of more value than I could possibly be in the field. Not yet having rendered service as a soldier, I claim exemption from all military convictions, and feel that I am not amenable to your regulations.' 'Sorry we can't see it in that light, and feel it our duty to dispose of you according to the regulations of our army. Corporal, let us have more water, and another drink before leaving; perhaps you will join us in a drink, as we have failed to find any since our

arrival in this part of the country,' he replied. 'That is true, and we consider our country fortunate in not having it. Thanks, I am not a dram drinker,' I said. He continued to catechise me, but finding nothing tangible, for which I could be condemned, at last, released me. I was at home the next day after this, not feeling secure, but closely watching an opportunity to escape, when suddenly a company marched to a halt in front of my door—Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant and Corporal, with Dan walking between—took seats on the front piazza. Dan came eagerly to meet me, and whispered under his breath—'Do what you can to save me.' I saw at a glance that it was a drum-head court martial, and felt my heart sink within me. Said the Captain to me, 'We are here sir, to give you a trial;' then, turning to the sergeant said, 'Sergeant, before proceeding, hand us a canteen of that water, and ask the woman in the house to send us glasses to take a drink of brandy;' and going on to me, 'to investigate the circumstances under which you are here within our lines. Your age and general appearance seems to call you into active service on one side or the other, and it appears to us that you are a man entirely out of his place in times like this. We have very little time to spend in business of this kind; what have you to say in regard to it?' 'Nothing,' said I, 'more than it is my misfortune to be here, prompted entirely by the desire to look after all that is near and dear to me; and, furthermore, I am not

now, and have not been connected with the military service of my country, and when circumstances will permit, I hold myself in readiness to go.' Mother had been standing unobserved, in the doorway, listening to what was going on. She could stand it no longer, and tottering out said: 'Sir, my home in Atlanta having been shelled, under the orders of General Sherman I have been sent here, to the residence of my son, to remain under his protection, and with instructions to the Federal army to aid him in any manner, not incompatible with the interest and welfare of the army.' Here she presented the order, saying, 'I demand a stay of my son's sentence until approved by the General.' The officers discussed the matter between themselves for a few moments, and coming to the conclusion that it would be impossible for me to escape without the lines, I was left at home for further disposition. 'What are you going to do with this man?' I said, pointing to Dan. 'That is just what we are about to decide, and we don't need your assistance in the matter either,' was the sharp reply. Poor Dan's expression was an anxious one, but I could do nothing but turn into the house and sit down at the little window that opens upon the porch, where I could hear."

During this recital of the Major's, Winona had been busily engaged inside the doorway. She paid no attention to the voices on the front piazza until during a lull in her doll talk with Susan, she heard her brother Dan's name called. Both the doll and

its new dress were immediately ignored, and she pattered out to the front porch to see what was going on. She ran and kissed the Major, but did not detect anything wrong until she turned and saw Aunt Sallie weeping.

"What's the matter, Aunt Sallie? Does something hurt you?" she queried innocently, her eyes opening wide, and a distressed expression coming over her face at the sight of her aunt's tears.

"Listen, darling," was all Aunt Sallie could say, as she tenderly kissed the little upturned face and lifted her into her lap.

The Major cleared his throat, and went on: "The substance of it was, that Dan had about recovered from his wound at Gettysburg, and had gone on the field again. But it proved too much for him. Unable to be in active service, he applied for a furlough, which he obtained with but little trouble. On reaching Atlanta, he found himself cut off, but being so near he couldn't stand the idea of going back without seeing you all, and so in trying to get through the Federal lines, he was captured. 'Plausible story,' sarcastically remarked one, as Dan finished his defence. Then came the testimony from another that Dan had been caught trying to get through their lines near here,—circumstantial evidence making him out a spy. I jumped up and hurried to the piazza. 'Comrades,' said the Captain, 'you have heard the testimony and defence in this case; what

disposition shall we make of the prisoner accused?' 'It is ordered that he be pinioned to a tree and shot, according to the regulations in such cases,' was the terrible reply."

"Oh, Aunt Sallie," interrupted Winona, "did they kill my brother? Oh, oh!" and she nestled her head, sobbing, on Aunt Sallie's bosom. "Oh, won't he ever come back any more, Aunt Sallie?" she questioned between her sobs.

"Listen, dear," and gentle caresses, was all the consolation that could be given her.

Again the major went on—"'Gentlemen,' I interrupted, 'I beg a word for this honest man. Before God, he is innocent of the charge you bring against him. I can prove—' 'We want none of your proof,' broke in the Captain, 'and if you don't keep quiet, we will reconsider your case.' He gave the command to 'Right-about.' Dan got up. I could see the muscles hardening in his face, as he clinched his teeth. He stood motionless for a moment, as if summoning with his last strength all his courage to meet his horrible fate. He walked to the steps, turned and looked in this direction. I knew he was thinking of Winona and you. It was too much for him. The muscles began to relax—the tears rushed to his eyes—the well rounded chin quivered like a leaf. Suddenly he extended his arms imploringly towards you: 'Little sister—home!' he said, and in a burst of anguish reeled against a post of the piazza. Oh,

it was pitiful! 'Oh—Oh— O-h my God! my God!'—he cried. I put my arm about him, and begged him to brace up and meet it like a man. 'Oh, it is not death—no, no, not death that I dread!' he said, in his deep emotion. 'May he not go home, if only for a moment's farewell? he lives but a short distance,' I pleaded. 'We can prolong this scene no longer,' said the Captain, with an official air, and gave the command, 'Forward-march!' Dan felt hurriedly in his pocket and brought out a key. 'Give this to Aunt Sallie,' he said, 'and tell her it will unlock my old trunk that is hid away in the dungeon. In the right hand corner, she will find a package of papers and a letter directed to little sister; tell Aunt Sallie to read it when alone—she is the only mother I have *here*.' He emphasized here, as if thinking of his own mother, to whom he would so soon go. 'Tell her to guard the papers that she will find there, as she would her life—they are valuable. No one knows anything but Mr. Simpkins; I left them and the letter there when I went to the war, so that if I never came back they would tell all.' This he was telling me as he marched along between the officers, with their clinking side arms sounding like the wetting of knives. I followed at his side. When we got just beyond the wheat-field, into the woods, they came to a halt. Ten soldiers were waiting there for them. The Captain, straightening himself up to the proper dignity of his position, said in an indifferent, monotonous tone, like a school-boy

repeating the multiplication table,—'Lieutenant Black of Company C, Fifth Artillery, will execute the order by placing a file of ten soldiers, five of which shall fire blank cartridges, and five ball cartridges at ten paces. Go! and do your duty promptly, and without torture to the unfortunate condemned. Prisoner, such is your doom; prepare to meet it.' The muscles in poor Dan's face stiffened again. We grasped each other's hands, and *looked* good-by—neither of us could say it. With a firm step, like a man and brave soldier, he walked to the tree where they pinioned him. It was an oak. He rested his manly head against its strong trunk, and looked up, yes, not down but up. You know how handsome he was, Sallie; well, I never saw him look so grandly as he did then, just in the prime of his young manhood. The wind had gently blown the brown locks from his high forehead. His shirt collar was unbuttoned and thrown back, exposing his broad chest, that rose and fell with the strength of deep feeling. The blue veins about his temples were swollen; drops of perspiration stood on his brow, and from the earnest expression of his fine eyes, I knew that he was praying. The very leaves above his head seemed to stop their rustling to listen to his holy supplication. Then came the command and question: 'Detachment—present arms—are you ready?—Fire!' There was a flash of light, a volley of smoke, and Dan Hardeman's warm life-blood gushed forth. You have felt, as well as seen the

contrast on a bright day, when the sun would suddenly go under a thick cloud—so it was then. Oh, yes; it was terrible, Sallie, but try not to cry so. The great Father who watches even a sparrow when it falls, looked down on that manly head, as it drooped to his breast in death, I know. Leave it all to Him. I took charge of Dan's body, and with the assistance of one of the darkies, put him away in a pine box at the foot of the tree. I once sat watching an artist carving a Christ from an ivory bone, and wondered what emotions his work aroused in his heart. When I took my rude pocket knife and cut the letters D. H. in that tree, as a 'headboard,' I think my feelings then, and that artist's, were somewhat akin. I knew you were alone, and to have sent you word would have done no good, for it was dangerous for any one to go about. I decided it was best to leave him there until I could get to you myself, tell you all about it, and together give him a Christian burial. I told my wife of it, so that if I was captured, or anything happened to me, she could tell you the sad circumstance. Just at that time, General Hood made a dash into the rear of the Federal army, necessitating, as you know, the withdrawal of the forces around my home. They were in such haste to get away that they forgot to look after my 'case,' as the Captain of the Court Martial termed it. The country being left open, I refuged with my family immediately, and sought shelter under our own

generals. This is my first opportunity to get to you, and now I've come to help you bury Dan."

It was a sad little company that gathered that afternoon around an open grave in the "Hardeman burying ground," about a quarter of a mile to the west of Aunt Sallie's. The pine box containing the remains of Dan Hardeman was lowered into the ground. A simple prayer was made, a plaintive, old-fashioned tune was sung, and the benediction said. The Hardeman meeting-house, the cradle of Dan's spiritual life, and in whose holy shadow the new-made grave lay, seemed to say with its solemnized expression, "Peace—let him rest;" and the tear-stained faces turned away. There was but one dry countenance among all who witnessed that pitiful scene, and that was Rag Jake's. He stood at a little distance peeping out from behind a tree—no one knew he was there, and had they seen him could not have judged his feelings by his expression, for he wore a chronic one under all circumstances. It was that of a shrivelled Irish potato, with a slit in it for a mouth, and small, yellow, blinking eyes, that expressed intrinsic meanness. He waited until the company of mourners had disappeared, then stole off through the woods.

CHAPTER IV.

WINONA'S big Newfoundland dog, Turk, lay snoozing under the kitchen window one morning when Cindy threw a pan of water out over his head. He jumped up, and stood gazing with a strange expression in his eyes; but when she tossed a fresh bone to him a moment later, he shook the water off his shaggy coat, wagged his tail, and went gnawing away, as if nothing had happened to disturb his slumbers. It was the same dazed expression that came into Winona's eyes as she sat rocking in her little chair, gazing into nothingness, thinking of the death of her brother. Just then, Aunt Sallie came in, and told her she was to take a trip to see grandpa and grandma. She clapped her little hands joyfully, piled her playthings away in hurried confusion, talking excitedly all the while to her doll, Susan, of the lots of fun they were going to have, and the big Yellow river. She cautioned her particularly about not running away from her to play in its waters, for she might fall in and get drowned. Then she wondered if grandma would have any fried doughnuts, and if there was a candy store near by where she could buy candy with the nickels

grandpa would give her. Happy as a bird in spring, hugging her doll Susan, she rode away with Mr. Simpkins and Banni towards Yellow river a few days after the burial. Their journey was full of vicissitudes, and not unmixed with fear of running upon the Yankees. To Winona, especially, was it hazardous on account of the continued exposure, which caused her a relapse on reaching their destination. In the mean time, Aunt Sallie at home was endeavoring to keep a brave heart for any fate, and hoping with each day that times would be better.

As the summer waned, Winona slowly grew stronger. Grandpa's supplies had run short, making it necessary for them to move their quarters. All railroad facilities to Atlanta were cut off except the Central road, and, in order to reach that, they came through the country to Barnsville. There, grandpa, grandma and Winona took the train for Atlanta, leaving the darkies to look after the teams and wait for their return with fresh supplies. The first news that greeted them on their arrival was, "General Hood can hold the city no longer; he is going to give it up to Sherman." "Our cause is lost," said grandpa, and turned sadly towards his home to at least get a last look at it.

"Wife," he said, "let us lock a few valuable things in an upstairs room; by a hair's breadth we may save them. Take what we can carry in our arms and make our way back to Barnsville, for to-

morrow Atlanta is to be evacuated. General Sherman has issued an order requiring the departure of all citizens within eight days, except such as are in the employ of the Federal government. The mayor and councilmen, in behalf of the citizens, have earnestly petitioned for a revocation of the order, but to no effect. One of the clergymen, for the same purpose, has interviewed Sherman, but his reply was, 'Fortune of war, sir, fortune of war! I want this place for a citadel, and want no white citizens in it.' And so we must go."

The next day was a memorable one to the people in Atlanta. As dawn peeped above the eastern hilltops, a wretched spectacle greeted her. Fully twelve thousand men, women and children, driven from their homes, were hurrying hither and thither in wild confusion. The earth trembled under the rumbling wagons, bearing the sick, and what of furniture and clothing they hoped to escape with. All day an incessant procession of terror stricken humanity and beasts kept the streets in a state of uproar. Gray haired men tottered with their canes —the lame hobbled on their crutches—children screamed and clung to the skirts of their mothers—cows lowed and bellowed—horses pawed and neighed—dogs howled, barked, and panted with lolling tongues, as if mad; while fainting mothers sank down on the wayside, to nurse their crying babes. All with the scantiest means, going—they knew not where.

"Come, wife, Winona," said grandpa, "there is just room for us here in this old freight caboose; hurry, hurry, or we will be crowded out; 'tis this or nothing."

The three piled in the narrow quarters with a lot of other people, irrespective of wealth or position, like stock in a pen, and started off towards Barnsville. It was slow, and most uncomfortable travelling at best, but when the engine broke down, and they had to stand for a night and day, out of reach of help, it meant absolute suffering. Their limited quantity of food soon gave out, and there was nothing left to do but fast. To Winona, not having fully regained her strength, the journey was most trying. The child began crying from hunger, when a good woman shared her scanty meal of two stale biscuits with her, which was all she had to eat during that day and night they were waiting. Then grandma left her for a moment to go for water in a branch in sight. Before she had gone fifty steps from the car, she heard a scream, and turning saw Winona lying, face-foremost, on a pile of pig-irons, just outside the car window, from which the child was leaning, when she lost her balance and fell. On picking her up senseless, a deep gash was found just at the corner of the eye and touching the temple.

"My God, she is dead!" cried grandma, but a moment later, a low moan escaped Winona's lips.

"Not dead, but even if she lives, she is scarred for life," added grandpa, hopelessly.

They rolled into Barnsville just before daylight and sat down on a log by the road-side to wait for sufficient light to guide them to the camp. Grandma hugged Winona closely in her arms, to protect her as well as she could from the night dews.

"If this child lives through this, it will be a miracle," said grandpa, "for already she has suffered in the past few months, more than many a strong man could endure. Should she live to be an old woman, her war scar will never leave her."

Then followed months of hardship; living in a small house, and buying whatever they could of clothing and food, at any price, with Confederate money.

On the 16th of November of the same year, General Sherman commenced his devastating march to the sea. A few days after, the news reached grandpa—"Sherman has destroyed Atlanta."

"Well, I will go back and see its condition at any rate, and think over what is to be done," he said, with a deep sigh of resignation. The next month he went. He found the city a mass of charred débris. What could not be burned had been blown up and torn down. In order to get to the spot where he expected to find his own home a wreck, he had to climb over heaps of ruins and walk through piles of ashes. The only signs of life were a flock of vultures here and there feeding on a decaying carcass, which would flutter and fly at his approach, or some half starved dog prowling for food.

"What could have saved it!" exclaimed grandpa

to himself, as he saw the large white house with its green blinds and great corinthian pillars—his home, looming up in the distance like a monument to its annihilated neighbors. The door was unlocked and creaked on rusty hinges, as he stepped in upon the bare floor. The carpets had been replaced by a coating of dust, and in place of the pictures on the walls, thick cobwebs hung. An old writing desk, and two or three rickety chairs were every vestige of furniture the house contained. Clothing, bedding, everything was gone.

"Ah, I see how it was saved—these scraps of paper, this desk, and the writings on the walls explain everything," thought grandpa. "From what I gather, this house was used for offices of the generals. Well, what is to be done," was the next thought suggested to him, as he took one of the chairs and sat down by a window. For several hours he sat there, thinking and trying to plan, until the moon rose full orbed, and lit with illusive expression the rugged ruins. The night was clear and cold. Not a sound was to be heard, save the melancholy wind that sighed around the corner of the house, seeming to say: "Gone! a-l-l-g-o-o-n-n-e-e." On looking out, musing, as did grandpa, over that stretch of desolation, one could, with a glance into the past, see a beautiful woman dressed in a chiton, and with sandalled feet—a terrible war—then ruins for centuries buried. Would this loved city, Atlanta, be a second Troy? Had the invad-

ing hosts usurped her power, and left her to sleep in débris through ages—perhaps forever—with only her memory living in song or story? By the gods of Olympus, no! Be patient, oh, moon-lit ruins! Thy haggard face shall yet wear progression's smile! Phœnix like, shalt thou rise to grander heights, for on thy battered gates we read—"RESURGAM!"

CHAPTER V.

APRIL, 1865, brought not only sunshine and shadow to the earth, but joy and sorrow to the people of the South. The words, "General Lee has surrendered!" meant a lost cause, but likewise a stop of bloodshedding. There were many sad hearts of widowed wives, orphaned children, and childless mothers, and many grateful ones happy in the embrace of their dear ones returned to them. Did Atlanta's people sit and mope over the condition of affairs? Surely no! The men put down their guns and took up the ploughshares. "We will begin anew," was their motto. Women who had known nothing but luxury before the war, put their hands to the spinning wheel and their thoughts to economy. "Make the best of it,' 'was their watchword. Slowly but surely, the streets of Atlanta were cleared and the sound of saw and hammer resounded on all sides. For months the bitterest hardships were endured, but her citizens kept brave hearts and willing hands. Grandpa and his family were once more reinstated in their old home. Now, Winona, still a delicate child, with an ugly scar about her eye, formed one of their number, for grandpa said

she was quite old enough to begin school, and could have better advantages in town than in the country with Aunt Sallie.

Childlike, she jumped up and down, in a state of ecstasy at the thought, and ran and put her Susan doll away in a closet with a lot of old rubbish, as if forever forsaking her childish ways for a more dignified calling. She had so often swung on the front gate, when the school bell would ring, to watch the big girls, with their books and satchels going by, and wonder in admiration, if ever she would be like them; and now, she was really going to be. Her blue-back spelling book was so clean and new, and she had such a feeling of importance as her teacher wrote her full name in it on the fly-leaf, and cautioned her gently against getting it soiled. Then, it was such fun to draw on her slate (only it made her flesh tingle to sharpen the pencil) caricatures, which she called "dogs" and "horses." But the recess was the best of all, for there were so many little girls her own age to play with, and the nice lunch grandma had tied up tasted so much better than when seated stiffly at the big dining table, where reproachful glances were cast at her when her table manners were not "just so." Winona had never known the companionship of children. Her big dog, Turk, Mett, and the colored girl Banni, who looked after her, had been her only sources of amusement. She had passed her days in an atmosphere of "old folks' talk," being taught that "little children must be seen and

not heard." And so only in snatches of her artless doll talk, did her individuality have an opportunity to assert itself.

What a potent charm is that strange, inexplicable influence called "personal magnetism!" The possession of it has placed many of limited capacity upon the heights of success; and the lack of it in others kept from them the laurels of great ability. It is that which when a speaker steps upon a platform enables him with the utterance of one sentence, to have his audience in his grasp. It is the lack of it that causes another to have his words, full of meaning and sound logic, to be received with indifference. It is that which in the general walk of life, oftentimes inspires confidence and promotes men to leadership. It is that which frequently stamps an unknown man, as he walks into a company, as "somebody," before he has even spoken a word. It was this mysterious, subtile quality in Winona's little nature that caused her playmates to call out—"We are going to play mother: let Winona Hardeman be the mother." Again, they would quote her as authority on subjects of their childish discussions, or leave them to her decision. Yet, she was a child of nature. It did not take long for the novelty of going to school to wear off, and the first day grandma was expecting company to spend the day, she timidly asked to stay at home "just that day." On being refused, she sullenly permitted Banni to button on her clean apron, picked up her

book, and went out saying to herself: "Oh, I wish I didn't have to go!"

Soon a "homesick feeling" to see her doll seized her. Despite the absence of Susan's two feet and one arm, she dragged her out of the rubbish with as much zest as a young maiden dons a becoming spring bonnet, after having put it aside for a season. And so, Susan's second reign commenced, which interfered very seriously, at times, with Winona's getting of lessons; but she was unusually bright, and could catch, while listening, what a more stupid child would have to study diligently. In this way, alone, did she frequently retain her superiority in her class, having a disposition, somewhat like a Quaker, to do things only as the "spirit moved" her. Some of her classmates called her the "show-off scholar," because she was always sent to the blackboard to draw, and was called upon to read for company. Others spitefully accused the teacher of partiality to her. She doubtless would have gotten the first prize at the end of the term had not grandpa given her a new wax doll on her birthday. Poor, maimed Susan, with her stiff china locks parted in the middle, and brought down behind her ears, was once more doomed to the closet, and the waxen faced "Girl of the Period" usurped her kingdom. Ah, how often is one's faithful friendship forgotten in times of pleasure, to be sought again in an hour of loneliness; only to be put away finally at the appearance of some one

who would better serve a purpose. Oh, waxen faced Girl of the Period, do not smile so complacently in your silken robes, from your throne. The very subjects which have placed you upon a pedestal, may yet cause you a most inglorious fall. A few risings and settings of the sun, and you, too, will be laid low with Susan, and the other old and unfortunate.

Girl like, Winona developed the habit of chewing gum ; consequently, before the wax doll had been in her possession very long, deep furrows, made by her little finger nail, scarred the fair face. A few more moons found her in the closet by Susan's side, skinless, scalped—a thing of the past.

Grandma said Winona was getting to be a regular "tom-boy," for she would climb the fences and trees on the lot, until the toes of her shoes were worn through in great holes. As a punishment one morning, grandma handed a new pair of copper-toed shoes to Banni, and told her to lace them on Winona. It was a keen blow to the child's vanity, but she was too proud to cry, and sat submissively for them to be laced. Laura Wilkins sat near Winona in school. She was the child of parents who were like puffed up frogs that had forgotten their tadpole days. Laura was daily inheriting much of their disposition. When Winona entered with her copper-toed shoes, she snickered behind her book, and nudged her neighbor to look. Winona felt, as well as saw, the sport that was being

made of her. All day her little heart was heavy. She had never felt so before. At recess she sat apart, and refused to jump the rope or join in any of the sports. As soon as school was dismissed, she hurried home alone—ran upstairs and hid herself, where she burst into tears.

How like a tender sweet flower is the heart of a child! Many do not realize how easily its petals are bruised. Every vein swells with love's perfume. There is no room for selfishness. In bestowing sweetness, it is no respector of persons. How keen to it are the first cold storms of the world. How it droops—then turns yearningly to the sunlight of love, so necessary to its life. The love of childhood is the pure extract. The love of after life is a diluted or adulterated perfume.

That night when grandpa came home, Winona did not run to meet him as usual, her eyes gleaming with joy. She waited until he had been in the house some time, then quietly came up as he was reading, and timidly leaned against his arm, looking up into his face with a "pity-me expression." She was always so rollicking that her manner of approaching him somewhat surprised grandpa. He put down his paper. One glance into her face told him something was wrong.

"Why, what is the matter?" he said, lifting her to his knee, and kissing her.

Winona did not reply, but continued to toy with the hem of her apron.

"Who's been treating my pet badly?" grandpa went on sympathetically, to gain her confidence.

Her chin began to quiver. The words came as if torn from her lips—"Grandma—don't love—me—she—scolded me—and said I was a—tom-boy. I climbed the fence—to look over—and holes come—in my shoes—grandma—made me—wear these" (holding up one of her copper-toed shoes). "Laura—Wilkins made fun of—me; boo—hoo—hoo—o–o–o!"

Winona sobbed as if her little heart would break.

"There, now, don't cry—don't cry any more, and grandpa will buy you a pretty pair of shoes. Grandma does love you; she only wants to teach you to be a nice little lady. I wouldn't mind Laura Wilkins—there, don't cry any more now; maybe she didn't mean it."

Grandpa's loving words were a "peace, be still" to her troubled heart. He drew her close to him. She rested her head against his breast. Soon she fell asleep under the tender, pacifying strokes of his hand, as he smoothed her brow. Ah, gray-haired sire, nestling that childish form, that quivered like a wounded bird, do you realize all that you have done? Not only have you chased away the warm tear rain, with the sunlight of your love, but you have left a touch of sympathy upon Winona's brow, that will linger until death.

An hour later, Winona was tumbling somersets on her bed, and trying to stand on her head, like

some of the boys she had seen. Banni, as usual, constituted her audience. Presently she came down with a thud, making the bed to creak.

"Law, Noni," said Banni, in a frightened undertone, "you better 'have yo'sef. You gwine knock de slats outen dat bed drectly, den ole missus'll be a comin' in hiah arter us. You'll tek cold fannin' roun' in yo' gown anyhows. Git under dat kiver and I'll tell you a tale."

Whether Banni's words recalled the copper-toed shoes, or the promise of a tale proved a subduer, is not known; but Winona crept under the cover without a word. Banni was a good natured darkey; she loved Winona, and the child, in return, loved her. Banni came into her life when the light came. There already existed between them an attachment that would last forever. It was that touching relationship, so often seen between the children of the South, and their black mammies and maids. Banni sat on the floor in front of the fire, her feet crossed under her. Her thick wooly hair was divided into many patches, and wound tightly with cotton thread. She scratched her head thoughtfully a moment, then began: "One time dar was a little gal, and she runned away from her paw an' maw, and went t' de woods t' pick blackberries, and a big bear come—"

"You are just making that up," interrupted Winona.

"No, I aint, ne'der," retorted Banni.

Just at this critical period of the story, grandma

entered to hear Winona say her prayers and dismiss Banni for the night.

And so in the sunlight and shadow of her April childhood, she fast glided into May girlhood. What rapid developments of character come with this period. The true disposition of the child begins to show itself. Thought and reason whet their swords for fiercer battles, and appreciation smiles in recognition. What happy days it brings; Sunday-school picnic days. If there was anything that could fill Winona's heart with joy to overflowing, it was the thought of the annual Sunday-school picnic.

She didn't mind going to Sunday-school when the lesson wasn't very hard. There were so many other girls there—she was so fond of her teacher, and she loved to sing the Sunday-school songs. Especially did she enjoy going when she wore a new white dress, pretty blue sash, buff shoes and Sunday hat. She carried her dainty little parasol as stiffly and upright as if it were a piece of delicate china, and feared breaking it. She could admire herself in the mirror for an hour at a time when arrayed in that outfit. There was but one disagreeable thing connected with it—she had to sit so still, to keep from rumpling her sash. She thought her teacher such a beautiful young lady, and how she longed to be "grown" and look like her.

Winona had a number of merit cards she had given her, and a lovely book for a prize. These she valued very highly, and kept them wrapped in tis-

sue paper, only bringing them out to show now and then. But in the presence of the annual picnic, all else dwindled into insignificance. It absorbed her dreams by night, and was the theme of her talk by day for weeks beforehand. To her great pleasure, the superintendent of the Sunday-school would tap the bell for several preceding Sundays and say, "We will now discuss the picnic for ten minutes." Then he would proceed to appoint committees of arrangement, and hear their suggestions.

Winona had thought as a child that Christmas was the grandest time of all the year. The Christmas tree, with its lighted tapers, glittering tinsels and festooned pop-corn gave her supreme happiness. Then Santa Claus came in person, with his great fur coat and flowing white beard, to deal out to the scholars the tantalizing packages. But since he had cruelly been unmasked to her, Christmas was to the taste, as champagne with the effervescence gone. But picnics would come with every spring time, and she felt sure, in her artless thoughts, that they would never lose their charm.

Would that it could be so! When the heart is young there is a fresh spiciness in pleasure that loses its strength with age.

Grandma and the cook always prepared the dinner. Winona was permitted to stand by, "if she wouldn't get in the way," and "look."

The "clack—clack—clack—click clack," of the egg-beater was so fascinating to her, and it was so

interesting to see grandma put the icing on the cakes. Then she was always allowed to scrape the pans when the cake stuck to the bottom.

"I wish we could have a picnic every week!" said Winona, as she viewed longingly a tempting jelly-roll.

"Well, I don't," answered grandma, feelingly, as she shut the stove door that had just burnt a blister on her finger, then mopped the perspiration from her face with the corner of her apron with a—"whew!" The cook didn't say anything, but cast a disgusted glance in Winona's direction, as she was kneading away on the dough for pie crust. When grandma stepped out for a moment, she began talking aloud to herself—

"Umph! ebery week! childun ain't got no sense nohows; ef dey had all di work t' do and messin' to clean arter, dey'd be glad 'nuf t' stay at home. It's all jes' foolishness—gwine out in de woods an' eatin' til dey git sick, and gittin' full o' chiggers, and ticks; den, be a whinin' and scratchin' deysef for a week arter."

Banni made no unfavorable comments, for she always went along to carry the basket, and in that way came in for part of the fun.

The girls looked so neat and sweet in their new gingham dresses and white sun-bonnets. There was such a scrambling for seats "next to the windows" in the cars. The happy faces looked out on the

observing crowd with such a "don't-you-wish-you were-going" expression.

The train emptied them into the heart of the woods, and like rabbits let out of a cage, they scampered in all directions. What a glorious feast was the dinner of fried chicken, cake, pies and such like. The mammas made much ado about the empty dishes being misplaced, and they tried to be so courteous in disposing of what was "left over." There was a general exchanging of compliments, and requests for recipes of the different eatables among them.

Tired out, they all piled into the cars again late in the afternoon. Their gingham dresses were soiled or torn, their sun-bonnets crushed, and their hands full of withered wild flowers. As the train rolled into town, they began singing, to let people know they were coming.

"Grandma, let me tell you something," said Winona, in an injured tone, coming in from school one afternoon. "Laura Wilkins is going to give a birthday party, and she didn't invite me."

"Well, my dear," replied grandma, consolingly, "you must not feel badly about it. Under the circumstances, I don't know that you should expect an invitation."

"What is the circumstances?" queried Winona.

"This is what I mean. The world calls Mr. and Mrs. Wilkins 'society people.' You grandpa and I 'substantial people.' Mr. and Mrs. Wilkins are

rich--they have fine carriages, wear fine clothes, and lead a gay life. Your grandpa and I have no desire to spend our money in making a show. We are old fashioned and quiet people. Mrs. Wilkins' disposition and mine are so unlike, there could be no pleasure in our knowing each other. We do know each other by sight, yet we are strangers."

"But, grandma, Laura and I know each other; she sits next to me in school and uses my things whenever she likes--even if she did make fun of me once, and sometimes I divide my lunch with her. You know it's Laura's party, and not her mother's."

"Yes, dear, but her mother sends the invitations to those she would like to have her daughter cultivate. Then, as I said before, Mrs. Wilkins and I are strangers. There are certain rules of society called 'conventionalities' that must be observed. Don't worry about it, and I'll let you go to the country to see Aunt Sallie on Saturday. You will have much more real fun there wading in the branch and riding the horses, than you would at the party. I want you, my darling child, to grow up as your dear, dead mother and father would have had you. I want you to be good and obedient—to study and become accomplished; then you will be happy and every one will love you. You have a proud, sensitive nature, I can see it now, that will cause you to suffer much in life, I fear; but if you will do as I tell you, the day will come when you will feel so strong in your dignity you will never

have to buy your way or position ; it will be yours by might of right. It will not only be because of a legacy that may be left you, or that you are related to the honorable So and So ; it will be because of *yourself*."

Winona looked bewildered. She drew a deep breath, sat thoughtfully a moment, then went out without another word.

"What does it all mean?" she tried to reason when alone. "Why are people strangers to each other, any way? Why do they pass each other without speaking? And what is all that that grandma wants me to do? My dear dead mother and father !—what made them die ; why can't I have a papa and mamma like other girls? Poor brother Dan ! Oh, why did God let them kill him? That terrible word con–con–ven–conven–tion–al–i–ties ! what a hard word ! Is there really any difference between Laura Wilkins and myself because her mother's carriage is bright and new, and my grandma's is old and dusty? Because her mother wears bright silk dresses and grandma wears sombre ones? S-t-r-a-n-g-e-r-s !"

The window was open. Winona leaned out on its sill in a thoughtful attitude, her chin resting in the palm of her hand. All of these thoughts rushed in bewildered confusion through her young brain. She looked out over a stretch of house-tops and patches of green. Far to the north a glimpse of the Blue Ridge gave the scenery a solemn grand-

eur. The shadows were creeping in the valleys, while the rays of the setting sun trembled in death on the tall church spires. Finding herself for the first time in the presence of the immense, unexplained enigmas of life, an indescribable feeling of depression came over her. The tears oozed from her eyes, and slowly trickled down her sweet innocent face. A crowd of boys wrestling on the lawn next door at last broke Winona's reverie. She was sure she heard Henry Brown's voice—hurriedly brushed the tears away and went to the side window to see, Yes, he was there. He was a great friend of the boy next door, so she often had the stolen pleasure of peeping through the blinds at him. "He was such a nice boy," she went on to herself in a second reverie. 'Oh, he was so good looking! He had given her such a lovely red and blue pencil to draw maps with at school, and she felt so funny when he did it. The girls said she blushed, but she knew she didn't. Grandma said she was entirely too young to be thinking of boys; but Henry Brown was only one boy. And then he wasn't boisterous and bad, like the rest anyway. How she wished she was a boy, and could play base-ball; run and jump, and have *real* fun. There was real fun in dressing up in grandma's clothes and twisting her hair in a knot on the top of her head, to play lady with Banni, but it wasn't like *boys'* fun. Why was it boys could do anything they wanted to and nobody said any-

thing? When *she* wanted to romp, grandma looked shocked, and told her to sit down and go to piecing her quilt, and be lady-like. How glad boys ought to be that they didn't have to be *lady-like*—it was so tiresome. She just knew Henry Brown sent her that valentine. The paper looked like white lace, and there was such a cute picture of a little boy named Cupid on it, shooting an arrow through a heart. Wasn't the verse of poetry lovely!

"The rose is red, and violet's blue;
Sugar is sweet, and so are you."

Henry Brown climbed the fence and was gone. Winona watched him out of sight, then turned the blinds down—the night had come.

CHAPTER VI.

As one waking from a sound sleep to find the early morning sun streaming in glory through their open casement, the air thrilled with the passionate songs of birds rejoicing at the birth of a new day, so Winona waked into womanhood. Like Joan of Arc standing amid the green where her flock of sheep grazed, dreamy mind visions floating about her, came to Winona the thoughts, "Why was life given me—what am I going to do with it?"

They were the inspiring voices that called to her imagination to try its wings, and bade ambition put on its armor. Then it was she saw all nature through rosy-tinted glasses. She built castles in the air of such dimensions and magnificence that their gilded minarets pierced the very dome of heaven itself. She pictured herself triumphant from the top of Parnassus, sufficient in her strength to bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion.

Alas! how many million glorious achievements have been born and died in the mind-world; never heard of in the material, with now not even a slab in memory's graveyard!

Now and then would come to Winona a stretch of quiet, even monotonous days. Such days have their intrinsic value in the formation of character. They frequently lead to a rigid self-examination; then comes the reaction of stronger determination and more powerful efforts. At such times she had a feeling of merely going along; growing older, that was all. From this torpid state she would soon rally.

"To live was such a joy! Oh, how hard it would be to die and leave this beautiful world," she would say, as a funeral train passed by.

Little she dreamed that if the corpse, borne along in the black-plumed hearse, could rise up under its mantle of white flowers with haggard face, would say feelingly: "Do not pity me, oh, child of youth! I would not change places with you!" then drop back into its narrow bed, free from care and pain, for a restful sleep.

Every passing zephyr whispered to Winona of love—every floating cloud was a beautiful panorama—every rippling brook a happy song—every flower a lovely thought, and all nature one sublime poem to her romantic nature. Enthusiasm pulsed through every vein of her body, and she was full of feeling to the finger tips.

"I know Winona Hardeman was always bright, but I never thought she would become so dignified. As a child she was so boisterous and full of mischief, she was sometimes a terror to the prim

'goody-goody' girls at school. She is very attractive—so talented, and, somehow, everybody likes her."

These were common sentiments, frequently heard expressed by the world.

Like a Texas Norther to a June rose, came Winona's first real blow of sorrow.

Grandpa's friends stood around with serious faces. The servants were hurrying hither and thither in distressed confusion. Agonizing cries greeted her as she came in from Aunt Sallie's one morning. She recognized grandma's voice.

"What is the matter?" she said, turning white, and almost staggering to her grandpa's room, a terrible fear seizing her. No one had the courage to answer, but turned away to hide their tears. Not a word escaped her lips, but, oh, such a scream she uttered as she fell across the dead body of her grandpa. That scream reverberated through the innermost recesses of her soul, and waked, for the first time, a deep vein of seriousness she nor the world did not know she possessed. Her nature was like a puzzle card that must be held up to a certain light in order to see the hidden letters.

When the oil of grandpa's life was absorbed and the lamp went out, shadows crept in many places. The dear old home was sold, for there was no will, and the property had to be divided. Grandma went to live in the country with Aunt Sallie. Winona's brother George wrote that she must come

to Nashville and live with him, for he was married now and had a sweet home. Then, she could better finish there the last year of her school-days.

The few days before leaving her native state were spent with grandma and Aunt Sallie in the country.

"Law, Missus! Lemme tell ye all someumph!" said Cindy, running in excitedly. "Ole Rag Jake am come back arter dese many years. He's out t' de back do' right now—come a sneakin' up, jest lak he uster do. He minds me o' a black snake a crawlin' long, and, missus, he says he wants fur to see you!"

Grandma dropped her knitting with a suppressed "Oh!" tangling the thread in her trembling fingers. Aunt Sallie's countenance was ashy pale, Winona, too, felt a little nervous at her faint remembrance of him as a child; but she couldn't understand why his presence should so affect grandma and Aunt Sailie. He wasn't very prepossessing, it was true, but she had never heard of his doing any harm.

Cindy had scarcely finished speaking, when he came in deliberately and sat down in their midst. Not a word was exchanged.

"Cindy," said Aunt Sallie at last, trying to appear calm, "go out and shut the door and see that no one listens."

Cindy did as she was directed, leaving the three together, shut up in the house. It was fully an hour before Rag Jake came out. He slammed the door

after him. Turk was lying on the front piazza wagging his tail in friendly greeting. Old Jake gave him such a severe kick in the side, as he passed, that the dog yelped piteously. Winona saw the cowardly act through the window. She ran out; threw her arms about Turk's neck and put her cheek against his shaggy head, pouring out tender, pitying words to him. What a wealth of affection she had! yet through her whole life, how few there were who knew it. Always courteous, kind, sympathetic, but her love was reserved. From that day when old Jake went out in a fury, Winona's expression changed. Like an evil apparition he came and went. The nature of his sudden visit was kept within the four walls of Aunt Sallie's room. Cindy dared ask no questions, but she looked very serious at times, as she scrubbed away over the wash-tub, muttering inaudibly to herself. Old Jake's name was never mentioned in the family circle.

CHAPTER VII.

"WHAT a pretty wife you have, Brother George."

"Yes, Winona, she is a fine woman, and I want you and Celia to be sisters indeed. I love and am proud of both of you. By the way, I must tell you what a pleasant compliment I heard paid you this morning. Professor Lane was passing here and heard you playing. Said he stopped to listen and wondered who it could be. I told him it was my sister, who had come to live with us. 'Well, you should give her every advantage,' he replied, 'for hers is a remarkably sweet touch. There's a wonderful amount of feeling in her music.' You see I tell you this, not to make you vain, but to encourage you."

"Thank you," said Winona, smiling the same old smile every one does when made happy by approval. "I am very fond of my music—there is something satisfying in it that I have never found in people or indeed anything else. Yet, I realize that I never can be a musician. It is one thing to sit down and play by ear, as I always play, a plaintive air that brings tears to the eyes, and another to understand the science of music. Of course I could never be a

real musician unless I did master the scientific part. I could never do that. I haven't the patience nor disposition. I dislike it, just as I dislike arithmetic, algebra, and such prosy things. I took lessons for a short time once, and found the different keys, the major and minor scales, and all the abbreviated technicalities, just as stupid and confusing as to work out difficult problems. I was as bored as in finding the "imaginary values of the unknown quantity" once. My teacher asked me, 'when will the values of X in problem number so and so, be imaginary?' Had it not been disrespectful to her as well as the science, I should have replied—they have been so since its beginning. I was as tired as when puzzling over "Compound Proportion" to find when the hands of a clock are together between the hours of ten and eleven."

"But you must admit that this menial labor, as it were, has very gratifying and useful results," argued her brother George, becoming interested.

"Oh, yes; if there *is* any result except failure, and I suppose even that has its place in life. But I have noticed that the majority of children are put to the piano before their feet can reach the pedal, or their fingers stretch an octave. They are kept there thumping by the hour, for years. A whack across the knuckles with a pointer informs them, that restlessly sighing and twisting on the stool, will not gain their liberty. No; they must practice! practice! a thing for which they have no talent, and at

the end of ten years, when asked to play, 'beg to be excused—they can't play without their notes.' Even if they had them, it would mean a mechanical, stammering effort after all their tedious hours of work, the tears they had shed over scoldings, and the dollars they had given the teacher. As for algebra; I don't see why a woman should bother her brain with that, unless she wants to be an old maid schoolmistress, and teach it to some one else. A woman will learn all she needs to know of addition—subtraction and multiplication, by spending money, and without the assistance of an arithmetic."

George Hardeman looked at his sister thoughtfully, and smiled. He had been separated from her so long, that he didn't know just what disposition or ideas she had developed.

"Then you believe in letting children follow their own inclinations as regards education," he went on in order to draw her out.

"No, not that. I do not mean to be extreme. If I had the brain and the time, I should try to know enough of every scientific branch to save me from ignorance, at least. Since grandpa's death, I have thought a great deal about the shortness of life, and how little one can accomplish towards mastering all of these mighty things. For that reason, one's disposition and talent should be analyzed, just as a physician would diagnose the case of a patient in order to see on what line they would be most suc-

cessful, and pursue it. A switching engine makes slow progress you know. One that is on the right track stops for a moment at all important stations along its line; yet, keeps the one thought of a decided point of destination ahead. If one loves music and has real talent, they will seek the piano as naturally as a morning glory opens to drink in the sun.

And if another delights in triangles, right-angles, or the problems and relations of X, Y and Z to each other, their necks will accordingly, grow stringy; their mouths prim and their bodies angular. There is so much, you know, in association and environment, and mathematics is so utterly devoid of poetry."

As Winona talked, she sat in a comfortable chair, her head resting against its pretty tidy, and turning abstractedly the leaves of a book she held in her lap. She had grown to be tall and slender, and carried herself with a supple grace. She was strikingly pale, with scarlet lips that parted over even white teeth. Her brow was crowned with a wealth of wavy brown hair. Her eyes were large and gray, with decided black brows and long heavy lashes; their expression varied with every passing thought. Sometimes they danced with enthusiasm, the next moment they were as wistful as a fawn's. The perceptible scar at her temple was not so disfiguring as had been feared in her childhood. Her brother thought her beautiful, as she reclined there under the mellow light of a student's lamp.

"Brother," said Winona suddenly, closing the book in her lap and sitting erect, "I hope I am not going to be a great disappointment to you."

George Hardeman took the cigar from his mouth that he had been leisurely enjoying. "Disappointed," he repeated, with a rising inflection, not comprehending the meaning of her words.

"I mean, I hope you won't expect me ever to read a valedictory and wear a gold medal, with "First Honor" engraved on it. I can never do it. I don't know that I care to. You look surprised. Well, each of us stand on a different hill-top in life, consequently, our perspectives vary. My view of the subject is this: A bookworm doesn't get the healthy nutrition out of dry paper and unpalatable printers' ink, that the lady bug does from a green lettuce leaf growing in a garden. Books at times, are most agreeable and profitable companions; but, when one pores over them constantly, they dwarf both their physical and mental natures. I think it is right and proper that we should pay deference to superior minds, but one should not at the same time, concede their originality to the thoughts of others. Self-reliance contains a strong virtue. The girl who took the first honor in my class last year, is an illustration of what I say. A thin, sallow, delicate creature, with round shoulders and sunken chest. She studied from morning till night, and frequently half of the night. Her lessons were accurately prepared, repeating them word for word, as in the book. She always selected

such subjects for composition as the life of some dead man, or the origin of paper. She gathered all the facts concerning her topic from history and presented them to you in a most prosy style. Yet, their correctness could not be disputed, and a satisfying "100," marked with a red pencil, crowned her studied effort. Had she been given the subject "Ocean Depths," she would have been drowned at her first dive for want of strength to get to the top; or, had it been "Eve's First Day in Paradise," she would have been hopelessly lost in the wilderness by sunrise. The little dots and lines on a geographical map meant to her the unadorned fact, that one indicated a city, another a river and another a mountain. Had she possessed an imagination, she would have seen rows of buildings, busy streets, floating vessels, and picturesque scenery. She would translate line after line of Homer's Iliad, without a grammatical error, yet never once feel the spirit and genius of the grand old poet. To her, Astronomy meant a calculation of distances and revolutions. While she bent over puzzling figures, with contracted brow, I sat erect with a smile, on the glittering chariot of Arcturus, and rode through the starry vault, visiting the inhabitants of those distant worlds with which my mind had peopled them. Oh, brother, there is such a pleasure in idealizing! I realize in it a happy gift, and am so grateful. Were I a poor Cinderella, shivering over dying embers, I could, with that gift, feel for a time like Monte Cristo

when he said, with uplifted gesture: "The world is mine!" A purely practical mind would say, "such thoughts go up like rockets, but come down sticks." Yes, and that same one will stoop to pick up those sticks for fuel to warm himself, or light to see. Had I a thorough knowledge of only two books, the Bible and Shakespeare—then—"

"George, have you decided to sleep down-stairs to-night?" interrupted Celia, impatiently, rapping on the door, and entering at the same time.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Sister Celia, for keeping brother so long. We were talking, and I did not realize how fast the time was going," replied Winona, apologetically.

"It is true you kept me, but I was very willing to stay," good-naturedly retorted George.

Celia busied herself locking the windows and pulling down the shades. Her only reply was "Good-night," as she went out with her husband.

The next day Winona was initiated in her new school.

"How do you like the new girl?" was the general question among her classmates a few days later.

"I don't think she is pretty, but her manners are very attractive," answered one.

"Well, I think she is pretty—has an unusual face. It doesn't keep you wondering who it is she reminds you of all the time," opposed another.

"Well, she is too indifferent to suit me—attends

to her own affairs all the time, as if no one else had any. She'll be called "stuck-up," you see if she don't," was the decided opinion of a third.

"Girls, she is lovely! I live very near her Brother George, and walk to school with her every morning. I don't imagine she is a girl that would ever become very confidential in friendship, but she is pleasant, chatty and certainly bright," was an enthusiastic remark.

And so the beginning of her last school term commenced. She affiliated pleasantly with all of the girls in their plans, but became intimate with none. If, in her heart, she didn't approve, she managed with such tact as never to offend. Her friends soon learned that they could approach her "just so far and no further." Her quiet dignity of manner created a mysterious atmosphere, which held for her always respect and admiration.

How many people lose what they would gain by intimacy and satiating familiarity! Aside from being taught, Winona, from impulse of nature, kept her own counsel. Never having had confidential friends as a child, now that she was grown up she didn't care for them. Yet she entered with enthusiasm into all social pleasures, making an agreeable impression wherever she went. She thought and talked of *things*, rather than about people and their affairs.

One day after dinner, Winona and Celia sat pleasantly chatting when George came in, sat down on

the sofa by Winona, put his arm around her, and now and then patted her cheek in a caressing way. Celia picked up a piece of fancy work and began vigorously to work.

"It is a glorious afternoon," remarked George, after a few moments. "Let's go driving, Celia."

"I don't care anything about it," replied his wife, rather sullenly, while stitching away.

"Why not? Are you feeling bad?" questioned George, with something of a surprised expression.

"No; I just don't care to go."

"Sister Celia, I would go," remarked Winona, in a quiet, persuasive tone. You will enjoy the country and fresh air so much."

"I am not going," was Celia's short, decisive answer, as she raised her eyes from the fancy work and looked straight at Winona.

There was a moment's awkward silence.

"You can go with him," at last she went on, still addressing Winona.

Winona looked confused for a second, and swallowed, to dispel the slight choking sensation in her throat.

"What a pretty horse Dick is, and he has such an easy gait," she answered with tact, in a cheerful tone.

George rose, and said pleasantly as he went out, "Celia, I'll drive around about five o'clock; if you feel like going, all right—if not, then I'll take Winona."

An hour later Winona was sitting in her room alone. Her eyes were tear-stained, and she looked out of the window with a wistful expression.

"If grandpa were only here I would go to him, and rest my head on his shoulder as I used to do when unhappy."

With that thought her tears came faster. But when she saw Celia go out of the gate she got up and bathed her face, for she knew her brother would be coming and she would not have him suspect. As George drove up she greeted him with a smile.

"Where is Celia?" he said.

"I do not know, Brother George; I only saw her go out of the gate."

"Well, get your hat and come on," he answered, thrusting his hands deep in his pockets with a troubled air.

They drove several blocks; Winona chatting pleasantly about this and that, but George paid no attention to her remarks.

"I don't understand Celia lately," he said, abruptly. "She always was a nervous temperament, and I never argue with her for fear of irritating her. If she gets provoked with me, I just go on and don't notice it; in a short time she is as agreeable as if nothing had happened. She has a good heart and noble principles, but lately she is unlike herself. I can do nothing that pleases her, and she will constantly pout and cry, making life

utterly disagreeable. I was sorry she spoke to you as she did to-day."

"Oh, I wouldn't worry, Brother George, perhaps she isn't well. You know a woman is not constituted like a man—they are not always responsible for their moods, having such sensitive nerves. Oh, there is Miss Grace, our vocal teacher. She is getting up the cantata of the Seasons, and I'm to be Summer. She insists that I can sing the part. How I wish that I had a grand voice. I had rather have it than any other gift. Silver-tongued oratory can rouse men from a state of lethargy to one of vaulting ambition. Paintings and statuary can make them stand in their presence with uncovered head—speechless! but music fills their souls with an unspeakable something that makes them feel as if they could fall upon their knees and cry aloud—yes, it makes them pray!"

"By the way, Winona, you were speaking once of one's analyzing themselves in order to find out for what they are best fitted. Have you given much thought to your own case?"

"Yes, Brother George, I have given much more thought than action. Society has restricted woman to one calling—motherhood. The married ones are quartered in their tents, and sit looking out with varied expressions upon the field where march the phalanxes of the single. Amidst all that marshalled array there is but one banner held aloft. It bears the simple inscription, 'Matrimony.' As the sun

lights its white satin sheen and golden tinsel, thousands with happy faces look up to it as if it were a heathen god, to follow whom would lead them into the delights of Beulah-land. Many there keep in the line of march, because it is human nature to follow the crowd, and others, with serious expressions, are there, because they think it *best* to be there, leaving, alas, only a part whose *hearts* directed them there. Should one lose step or drop out, for this reason or that, to pursue their own course, they are dubbed 'old maids,' or 'cranks,' and denied the deference paid their more conventional sisters. Now, were that army composed of *men*, it would appear like a great fete day, or grand trades display, so numerous and varied would be their banners. So, you see, there isn't much use of a woman's bothering herself about the matter. It has been decided for her. Now, whether she will always submissively accept the position assigned her, or openly rebel against the narrowness of her sphere (she has done so long ago secretly in her heart), is a question the future will decide. As for myself, I realize that I will soon graduate, and be a woman in the full acceptation of the word. Of course, I shall do, in general, as every other woman. I have no desire to be called eccentric, but I shall never allow myself to be specialized so long as I can sustain my individuality. As for marrying, I do not say I will or won't. My association with men has been very limited, and, as yet, I have never

seen one that I would be willing to have sit opposite me at the table three times a day for three hundred and sixty-five days out of a year through life. My nature doesn't flourish on monotony."

George Hardeman turned and looked scrutinizingly at his sister. The reins lay slackened over the dashboard; the horse walked leisurely along with his head down, and the wheels of the buggy creaked for the want of grease as they rolled through the stiff mud on the country road.

"Winona," said George, after a moment's silence, "you have seen nothing of the world; who put such ideas in your head?"

"They were not 'put,' Brother George, they grew. If ideas could be obtained by inoculation, I would lay my head on the operating table the first opportunity." Here a playful smile lighted her face. "A tree out in a lone forest is in the world, but not of it. A passing breeze drops a tiny, mysterious germ upon its bark, and soon a curious plant and flower is grown, called an orchid. I guess my ideas are orchids." She laughed a merry little laugh, and took the lines from her brother's hand, "Let me drive awhile," she said, tapping the horse, and making him start off with a jerk. "Dear me, how late it is! The sun has gone down. Celia will think something has happened."

As they reached home the lamplighter was hurrying down the street, leaving spots of yellow light behind him. Celia didn't appear at tea that even-

ing. She sent word that she had a headache and had retired.

How many different moods and ailments are palmed off on credulity as a "headache!" The home circle for several days after wore a sombre expression. What a large shadow so small a thing as one person can cast sometimes.

"Well, it is decided," said Winona with a smile, coming in from school one day, and flourishing her monthly report.

Celia looked at her across the dinner table thinking—"what is she up to now?"

"What is decided," said George, putting down his knife and fork, and looking at her report.

"Why, I'm to have a real calling! My drawing teacher, my report and I—a committee of three—met to-day and decided that I'm to be an artist. Not one who daubs in colors; it takes true genius to do that successfully, but I'm going to be an illustrator. I have always been so fond of sketching and have been at it since I had my first slate and pencil. I was sitting, just making parallel lines in an absent minded way, the other day, when my teacher came up and looked over my shoulder. I was embarrassed to think he should catch me idling, and in my confusion, started to crumple the paper on which I was drawing for the trash basket.

"'Don't! let me see that,' he said. 'I wasn't

drawing—I was only making straight lines," I answered apologetically. 'Yes, but you need not be ashamed of them; they have fine values. Were you making the shadows—say on a wall; they are the exact strokes you would use. You have much talent, Miss Hardeman,' he said with emphasis; then, went on to the next girl, leaving my heart bounding with pride, and enthusiasm. To-day, when my report came with "Drawing—100," I just made up my mind that some day I would be an expert at illustrating."

"Well, what good will it do you, if you are?" remarked Celia in a discouraging tone.

"Why, Sister Celia, it will do a great deal of good. In the first place, I believe in healthy occupation as a great remedy for social evils. Secondly, we are all put here with faculties to live—not merely to exist. When I graduate, my time must be consumed in some way. Society has its advantages and domestic life its values, but to live alone in the former would mean retrogration into trivialities, which would never satisfy the longings of my nature. To live entirely in the domestic, would mean to be a drudge, without a single ennobling aspiration. You remember Hood's "Song of the Shirt"—"stitch—stitch—stitch, with fingers weary, and worn." If by my intellect and talent, I can save myself from either extreme, and make a position of happy medium, I will not only be doing good for myself, but for all with whom I come in contact. Happy peo-

ple, I think, are like 'things of beauty that are joys forever.'"

"Well, I don't believe in pampering girls in any such high flown ideas. Women were made to marry, and settle down; that is the avocation God gave them."

"Yes, Sister Celia; and it is most high and sacred. To be a married woman means more than being able to cut and make a garment in order to save a few dollars for economy's sake. I should want to be worthy of the highest commendation as a mother, as well as the doubtful compliment—"wife, your biscuits are equal to the cook's." To bring a human soul into the world is, oh, such a responsibility! It seems to me a mother should have comprehended much before she dares to plant in the garden of human nature, a flower, which if not rightly cultivated, will run riot like a noxious weed. I believe a child's right early training shapes its final happy destiny, even though dark middle ages sometimes intervene. I've never known a mother, but that simple little prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep," I learned at Aunt Sallie's knee, tied to the anchor of my innocent childhood, will be a silver line running through all my life, to be broken only, I hope, at the Golden Gate."

"Well, I can't answer your argument, in such flowery language, but all I know is, my convictions are *common sense*," replied Celia, forcing a smile to mitigate her insinuating tone.

George had listened attentively to their conversation, casting admiring glances at Winona. He ventured a remark at the close.

"Well, there's no harm, at least, Winona, in your trying your hand at art, and I am willing to help you all I can."

Dessert was taken in rather an awkward silence. Celia didn't wait for coffee, but excused herself, stepping on the tail of the pet cat, as she went out. She didn't stop to make any apology to Grimalkin, but shut the door with a "bang" that made the china rattle.

And so the days rapidly passed. The same programme, consisting of Celia's moods, George's worry and Winona's tears, made tolerable by an interspersion of recreation and social life, was frequently repeated. In Winona's times of depression, she would invariably go around the corner to see Miss Jean Lowe, for consolation; the only confidential friend she ever had. Miss Jean was five years Winona's senior in age, and many in experience. She had travelled extensively; was very cultivated, and spiritual in nature. There was in both an affinity that appealed to each other and soon united them in a strong friendship. Miss Jean regarded Winona somewhat as a prodigy. "Poor dear child!" she would say, in her sweet sympathetic way, taking Winona's hand in hers, as she listened to the recital of her trials, "What a rare combination of element you are! With your nature, I fear you will

have to suffer much before you reach the strength of character you are equal to. God has given you great power and refined feeling; but if you misdirect those forces, it will mean *woe*. There are comparatively few in the world like you; for that reason, you will have to learn to tolerate and make the best of trivialities, both in people and things. That is going to be very trying. You comprehend quickly and broadly. That will create in you all the while a restlessness for something more stupendous. To be happy, you will require to pursue subjects, as a child pursues the spot where the horizon touches the earth—always beyond you. Your inclinations will tend to seeking a congenial path, but life will demand of you that you go in the broad road of humanity. Ah, my dear, you lack *experience!*

"It is its own hard task-master," said Winona half audibly, as if talking to herself.

"Yes, that is true, and it is paradoxical in its nature. I wish for you, that you might never have experience, in order to retain the happiness of innocence. Yet by experience, one learns to fortify that happiness against the ravages of the world. I'm dealing of course, with experience of the world alone. It is a lamentable necessity to the perfection of character. That is why we do not see more well rounded people; they do not bend like a reed under a storm, and straighten up with renewed vigor after; but stand weeping willows for life."

"Or like sick chickens, with the wings of their souls hung down," put in Winona, brightening up with a little laugh, at the comparison. It always put her in a good humor to talk with Miss Jean; she made her forget herself, and gave her strong thoughts instead.

After days of preparation among both teachers and pupils—squabblings over the honors—much talk over what they were going to wear, the eventful night of the graduation arrived. Among an array of forty sweet girl graduates, there was none quite so attractive in appearance as Winona Hardeman.

"Who is that pretty girl sitting next to Sue Downs," questioned one in the audience, of her neighbor, while stretching her neck to get a good look at Winona.

"Why, it is that Miss Hardeman you have heard so much talk about.

"Well, she is the prettiest girl on the stage."

"I think so too. You ought to have heard her sing in the Cantata of the Seasons. She has one of the sweetest voices I ever listened to."

"That Miss Hardeman is a stylish and queenly looking girl, isn't she," remarked a husband to his wife. "Yes, and she is charming. I don't know any girl I admire more," was her reply, having no daughters to arouse her jealousy.

"I wish you would look at that Winona Hardeman; she sits up there like she owned everything.

Sister says she is a conceited, stuck-up thing, anyhow."

"Did she take one of the honors?"

"No, indeed! Others don't put quite the value on her brains she does herself," was the spiteful comment of one sister, voicing the envious spirit of another.

When Winona stepped forward to read her essay, the audience quieted. They gave her the strictest attention throughout its reading. When she had finished, thundering applause and a great heap of flowers were hers. There was one immense basket of roses—the loveliest of all, grouped at her feet. A card, tied with a bit of blue ribbon, hung at its side. Her curiosity refused to be quieted, so she slyly turned it with the toe of her slipper, until the light fell full upon it, and read—"To Miss Winona Hardeman, with compliments of Fred Manning."

"Who is Fred Manning," was the thought that puzzled her brain during the rest of the exercises. She looked at every young man in the audience, to make a guess as to which was he. There was to be a reception later, and she supposed she would meet him. It seemed to her as if the different trustees, teachers, and dignitaries, would never get through delivering prizes, making flattering speeches, and giving boring advice. After thoroughly trying the patience of all, the end came. Winona's friends gathered around her, and showered compliments.

"Your essay was the gem of the evening," was

their theme. George Hardeman took Winona by both hands.

"I'm proud of my sister," he said in an undertone, with suppressed feeling. Poor Celia looked as if she didn't know just what to say or how conduct herself. "Every one seems so pleased, it won't do for me to be disagreeable, yet, I don't want her to feel that I approve of her;" were some of her torturing thoughts.

"Sister," said her brother, touching her arm to attract her attention from the basket of roses she was greedily smelling; allow me to present, Mr. Fred Manning;—my sister, Miss Hardeman, Mr. Manning." Winona blushed that he should have caught her showing preference for his flowers, but with womanly tact, gracefully chatted away to him.

"What a handsome fellow is that Mr. Manning," thought Winona, reviewing the evening, as she stood before the mirror, braiding her hair to retire that night. "I don't know when I've met a gentleman with such charming manners. And so I'm a debutant, and am to go into society regularly; what a novel experience. I wonder how I will like it just for a change. I guess it will afford a good opportunity to study character. To be a belle, I will have to learn to be coquettish and fluent in small talk;—imagine Winona Hardeman being coquettish! How ridiculous. Small talk makes one feel so nonsensical. It is merely an unsatisfactory

consumer of one's time—I believe I had just as soon be a wall-flower, and think it away. Of course, I shall have to gossip a little, or I will be a rather prosy acquisition in my new sphere. No; I will never make a society belle," she decided, as she knelt down to say her prayers.

The long, hot summer days followed. Mr. Manning became a constant visitor to Winona. She had a number of Sunday-afternoon callers, but there were no gaieties; everything was tedious and dull. An oasis in the form of an invitation from the Colonel and his wife to visit W——, came in the midst. Winona was delighted. She had heard so much of the beauties and pleasures of W——, and Mr. Manning would come out and spend Sundays, as it was only thirty miles from Nashville. She had grown very fond of his society.

The train stopped and the conductor called out: "Cedar Hill." Winona hurried out. The Colonel and his daughter were there to meet her. The station presented a scene of only a few small houses and one store. This store contained dry goods, groceries, various kinds of merchandise in minute quantities; and, at the same time, served as the Post-office. A motley group that generally collected at train "time, stood" gazing. Two mules tied to a hitching rack shied and neighed as the train rolled on. A woman wearing a calico dress, and long gold "ear-bobs," ornamented with a bit of red coral, and a snuff tooth-brush in her mouth, stood in the store-

door, holding a half naked, dirty-faced child in her arms.

"How very English," remarked Winona, as she stepped into the great carriage drawn by two fine horses, with the driver sitting high. "Those people look at me, as if they were wondering what royal personage am I, arriving at this hour of the day."

The Colonel smiled, and gave his signal to the coachman—"all right." A drive of a few miles along a shady country road brought them to W——, the name of the Colonel's country-seat. A broad green lawn, dotted here by an ornamenting shrub, shaded there by a massive oak, sloped up to the house. It was a wooden building, colonial in style. Following an old custom, at one corner, just below the roof was the date of its building. A gilded eagle hovering above the numbers, 1799, might have been mistaken by one of this latter day, for the crest of the Colonel's royal ancestry. At one side was a great rose-garden, and just beyond, the family burying ground. Back of the house was the garden, orchard, and a number of old slave cabins.

"What an ideal spot!" exclaimed Winona, taking in its beauties at a glance, as she alighted. "Indeed, if I lived here, I should insist upon being titled 'Lady Winona.'"

Both the Colonel and his daughter enjoyed her enthusiasm and look of pleasant surprise. The latter was a sweet natured girl and proved an agreeable companion to Winona, during her visit. They had

strolls in the woods together; ate fruit, read a little, took long naps, played the piano by fits and starts, rode horseback and discussed Mr. Manning. He had been out two Sundays in succession. The last time he remained a day longer, leaving Winona in a curious state. She wandered about in a restless, absent minded way, seeming not to take her usual interest in things, and sought every opportunity to be alone. She would take a book and saunter to the rustic seat under the big oak on the lawn. There, she would sit for hours at a time, feigning reading, but going over in imagination, her conversations with Mr. Manning, when the Colonel's daughter would join her with—"What an interesting book that must be! Aren't you tired reading?"

Winona's answer would be constrained and commonplace. She had never known the week-days to be so elastic, stretching themselves into almost unendurable lengths.

Jerry, the coachman, handed her a letter on his return from Cedar Hill, one Saturday afternoon. On looking at the handwriting and postmark, she did not wait to take a hair pin from her brown coil and leisurely open the envelope, but hastily tore it with her fingers. Her eyes had a devouring expression, as she read. A troubled, disappointed look suddenly flashed over her face. She bit her upper lip meditatively as she slowly re-folded the letter, and slipped it back into the envelope. Winona didn't don her most becoming dress the next morn-

ing. Mr. Manning didn't come that Sunday. She was so relieved when night came; she had never spent such a tedious, torturing day, endeavoring to smile and be agreeable. She came to a sudden realization the middle of the following week, that it would be an imposition on the Colonel's generous hospitality for her to remain longer, deciding that she must go home immediately, but promising to come back soon again. His daughter assured her of the shortness of her stay, and insisted with the others for its prolongation, but with no avail. Go she must and did. It seemed to her the train stopped at more stations, and remained longer, going home, than when coming out. She had thought before that Nashville was the ugliest city, topographically she had ever seen, but on her return, it seemed to have transformed somewhat, during her absence. She greeted Celia in a most affectionate manner. She had never known her room to appear quite so attractive. She was in the best humor possible, chatting lively and constantly, and humming tunes, as she went about the house. Mr. Manning called the next evening, to welcome her home, and repeat his regrets at being kept from seeing her at W——. the Sunday before on account of sickness.

The summer waned and autumn donned her variegated robe. Jean Lowe had been spending the summer at the sea-shore. Winona wrote to her there, but ere the letter had reached its destination, Jean had gone to the mountains and never received

it. Winona waited anxiously for a reply. How she did wish Jean was at home, so she could talk with her, and tell her her secret. Writing such important things was so unsatisfactory.

George Hardeman wore a grave look as he entered the sitting-room one evening that September. Winona was playing a sprightly waltz at the piano. Celia sat making paper flowers, which a more cultivated taste would have termed "common."

"Come here and sit by me, Winona; I want to talk to you," said George affectionately, holding out his hand to her when she had finished playing.

Winona smiled, but her heart had misgivings, as she saw the expression of his face. He held her hand in his as he talked.

"Winona," he spoke slowly; "are you sure you love Fred Manning?"

Winona blushed and hesitated. "Yes, brother George; I think I am," she said at last, while seeming to inspect the figures on the carpet.

"How do you know it?"

"Well, this is how I know it: of all the gentlemen I've met since I graduated, and the few before, none have interested me as Mr. Manning. I enjoyed being with the others, yet they were, in a way, matters of indifference to me. They were by no means necessary to my happiness, even though they did add to my pleasure. I would sometimes be thinking of Jean, or something else quite as far away in the midst of their conversations, catching

on to the last words of a remark with a desperation, in order to be able to return a sensible repartee. Some of them bored me with their common-place talk, until I had to resort to counting the ornaments on the mantel, in order to keep awake; or swallow choking yawns to save my politeness. With Mr. Manning, it has always been different. He has a grace and polish of manner that impressed me from the first. I think him the handsomest man I ever saw. While he isn't very intellectual, still, he converses easily on general topics, and quotes poetry beautifully. He dresses in the best of taste; his cravat is never an off color; his cuffs never soiled, and his pants never baggy at the knee. I am restless and anxious when I am away from him, and perfectly contented when he is near me; even though he should sit and read the newspaper without a word. As for any other reason for my loving him, I know of no better than a woman's—'just because.'"

"What do you know of his moral character?"

"I have never seen the least indication of any but the perfect gentleman in him. He never indulges in vulgar insinuations, as some others I've heard. He smokes, but I'm sure he doesn't chew—I could tell it if he did. I could never tolerate a man that had that distasteful habit. As for drink, I've never detected the least odor of it on his breath."

"My dear sister, I'm sorry to tell you that many men are like much silver that shines but is not ster-

ling. Plated ware and solid seem to be almost neck and neck these days. Fred Manning's father is an intimate friend of mine; and a noble, fine gentleman he is too. A son doesn't always follow a father's good example. We can't tell into just what Fred will develop yet; he is only twenty-one. I'm afraid he's inclined to extravagance. He is working on a small salary, yet is seen at all the places of amusements, and entertainments, and keeps up the expensive accessories of such a life. He will have to put aside such things, and attend strictly to business if he keeps you up in the style to which you have been accustomed. I have never seen him intoxicated or heard of his doing anything disreputable, yet he is known as 'one of the boys.' People are invariably judged by the company they keep."

"But, brother, suppose he is a bit frivolous now; when he is married, he will give all of that up. You see he loves me dearly; he tells me so over and over again in such earnestness. He says he has never loved any one before, and vows he never will again, should I refuse him. I will exert such a good influence over him, that he will not care for the world and its wickedness."

"Poor child!" said George Hardeman, turning his eyes away with a helpless expression. "Winona," he said, with a tone of regret, after a little silence, "I must admit that I am surprised at this step of yours. You are far above the average woman—think and reason with depth on most sub-

jects; but in this, you do not seem to realize. I would not interfere with your happiness, but I think you are acting hastily." He saw the pained look his words brought to her face. "I do not mean to be severe," he went on; "you have been so shielded in your innocence—are so pure-minded and charitable, that it is hard for you to comprehend such things rightly. You have spoken to me very sensibly on the subject of matrimony heretofore; so much so that you caused me to think seriously. But, like many, happy in the boat of their first love, you are sailing on a river whose surface now is shining and placid—ignorant of its dark, swift undercurrent. Should any one who had tested it, tell you of its danger, you would listen with doubtful credulity or self-assurance of your ability to avoid the rough places. Take my advice, Winona; think seriously about this matter before you act."

During their conversation Celia had fingered away at her paper flowers without a word. She was delighted at the prospect of getting rid of Winona, in a measure; then, George would give more attention to her. "Marrying would level Winona's high-flown ideas, as a kite is drawn in for want of sufficient breeze to fly it." In her heart she felt exultant that her "common-sense" doctrine she had advanced was being followed; but not daring to commit herself by word, she would wait and see how it all turned out first." She had a

shrewd way of encouraging Winona towards the step when alone with her without directly advising. A magician's hand could not more dexterously place a pot at either end of a stage, plant a flower in one, the audience to find it mysteriously blooming in the other, his seeming, with a smile, never to have touched it, than Celia could sow a seed of discontent, yet shirk the responsibility with a tantalizing "I told you so."

Winona was not down to breakfast next morning. She was as sensitive to disapproval as is a sensitive plant to the touch. Her brother's talk made her sick at heart. "Did she love well but not wisely?" Was Fred Manning really necessary to her life's happiness? Would he be all she would desire in a husband? Should she try to give him up? How hard it would be! Oh, if Jean would only come—she saw things so clearly. There were many nominal friends to whom she could go and pour out her heart. They would listen with an "Oh, that's too bad," but so soon as her back was turned, use her sacred story as material for a chain of gossip, each link exacting of the next, "not to tell." These were some of the torturing thoughts that filled her brain and had kept her restlessly tossing on her bed all night. There was a rap at her door—her brother entered.

"What is the matter, Winona? Are you not feeling well this morning?" he said, sitting on the side of her bed, and again taking her hand in his.

She was unable to answer. Her tightly-strung nerves caused her feelings to give way, and she burst into tears. George knew what a relief it is for a woman to cry sometimes. She would feel better after. He waited until she had finished, then said in a kindly, cheerful tone: "Winona, I have a plan for you. I do not want you to do anything your heart and judgment refuses to accept, but I put this before you for consideration. You love your art; your income is a modest one. If you will go north I will give you a year's training at the best art school there; then if at the end of that time, you *still* find Fred Manning necessary to your happiness, I will have no more to say."

"Oh, brother George, you are good to me. I want to do right, and will try. If you think it best, I will go willingly, regardless of my feelings."

Celia did not come near all day to see how Winona was, or ask if there was anything she could do for her comfort. Winona wondered how Celia would take her brother's proposition. That afternoon she wrote a brave letter to Mr. Manning breaking their engagement, and telling him of her intended departure. An hour later she went to Celia's room. "Sewing?" remarked Winona, as she entered. Celia made no reply, but treadled the machine at a rapid rate. When she had finished the long seam and let down the needle with a "click," Winona said: "Sister Celia, what do you think of my going north to study art?"

"I have nothing to do with it," she answered, busily engaged taking the basting threads out of her work, and without having once turned to notice Winona since her entrance into the room.

"It is indeed very generous and good of brother George to send me."

Celia could control herself no longer. She had, heretofore, shown her animosity by actions more than words. Wheeling around from the machine she rose and confronted Winona. She glared at her as an infuriated animal would at its prey.

"What right have you to accept so much from my husband! I will not allow *any* woman, even if you *are* his sister, to so usurp my place! What is his is mine! I refuse you assistance! If he gives it, then it will mean a separation between us! I suppose you desire a higher education in order to fit yourself for entertaining Rag Jake some day!"

Winona turned deathly pale and reeled as if to faint, as she abruptly left the room without a word. She fell upon her bed, and buried her face in the pillow, sobbing aloud as she had never wept before. "Oh, what a look! How it dried up my very life-blood! She knows then, and used Rag Jake as a butcher knife, to carve up my very heart for jealousy to feed upon! Oh, God! pity her! pity me!" prayed Winona in her terrified anguish. When she had become calmer, her independence began to assert itself: "I will stand this no longer! She has made my life a torture. I have been intimi-

dated until I am seldom my natural self in her presence. I will no more tremble and crouch, like a hunted animal. I am a woman and as such, shall sustain my dignity. I will go away somewhere—anywhere!"

With her emotions ill-regulated—in a state of worry and excitement, Mr. Manning was announced that evening. She met him with a flag of truce. It was not accepted. His visit was a volley of loving pleadings and desperate threats of suicide, hurled at Winona with great agitation. They came with such vehemence in her confused state, that she was unable to cope with them, and an absolute surrender followed. Then came a hastily arranged wedding.

CHAPTER VIII.

WINONA had been married just one year. A visit from Jean Lowe was her anniversary present. Jean had never seen Winona since her engagement, having gone abroad for a year after her sojourn in the Catskills at the time of Winona's marriage. Winona was sitting at the piano playing Gottschalk's "Last Hope," her heart chords vibrating in sympathy with every note of the sad melody.

"I wonder if it is love in a cottage," thought Jean, as she took in, at a glance, Winona's simple little home on a back street. She entered the gate and walked quickly up the walk bordered with blooming chrysanthemums.

Winona threw her arms about Jean and kissed her again and again. She was one of the very few to whom she demonstrated her wealth of affection. They sat down beside each other on the sofa, holding hands, as of old.

After the usual greetings, Jean said, "'When the cat's away the mice will play,' come now, tell me all about it."

Winona's face lost its brightness as suddenly as a sunbeam dies under the shadow of a dark cloud.

"Dear me, Winona, your expression reminds me of a hospital. They always have such a sombre appearance. I suppose the pain in their bosom is so sharp that it cuts through the very stone to the surface."

"Oh, Jean, you have guessed it! I *am* sick at heart," said Winona, bursting into tears, and pillowing her head on Jean's breast.

"Poor, dear child," said Jean, sympathetically, smoothing back Winona's brown locks. "Winona, you know that I love you dearly. You are trying to bury your sorrow, keeping a pleasant exterior for the world, as a worm is buried in the core of a bright red apple. I know your reticence of nature, but to me, as truly your friend, you can speak freely."

"Ah, Jean, it is that *experience* you once talked of to me that I am learning."

"Have you been deceived, Winona?"

"No, not exactly that—my faith in God and man still remains, but I have been sadly disappointed." Winona then minutely related to Jean her courtship and marriage. "You see," she went on moralizing, "I had never been attached to any of the opposite sex, save my relatives, and Henry Brown. My affection for him was a child's, and passed away with his disappearance from our circle. The days following, until my graduation, were filled with school duties. I met Fred Manning at the beginning of a long stretch of quiet summer. The laying

aside of school ambitions and occupations left me in a receptive state for some new experience. I had read of love and believed in it as a blissful state that would some day, in the distant future, come to me. I listened to many married people, with cynical ideas, and wondered how they could have made such serious mistakes in their selections. I had in my mind an ideal lover, whom I believed would materialize at the proper time. When I met Fred, I thought him almost like my ideal. There were only a few things wanting, but my infatuation would not admit them real deficiencies. Any woman is pleased and flattered by the attentions of a man she admires. If she has met no other whom she admires more, his constant sweet speeches and gallantry will awaken in her a deeper feeling, that she believes, at the time, will last. I have found that it is woman's nature to love and be loved, just as naturally as the sun shines—both are by God's command. I understand now, why there are so many indiscreet alliances, and cross old maids. If woman could only realize that it is not that special man, often, who wakens in them an effusion of feeling they mistake for love, but only the longing within their own nature for something to fill the voids of life, they would stop to reason before hastily acting."

"I see all you are saying, Winona, is focussed towards one thing—"

"A great mistake," interrupted Winona, sadly, "and I have made it!"

"What, then, would you regard as the sum and substance of the cause?"

"*Ill-regulated emotions*, my inexperience, and Celia's jealousy led to them. Oh, Jean, I can forgive Celia, but I can never forget! Out of the night of my past that look of jealous hatred she gave me will stare at me forever, like the fiery eyes of an infuriated animal in the dark. She's the compass that pointed with decisive finger to the path I was to walk. It was, indeed, a gesture full of meaning and an act of great responsibility. If only I had gone north, I would have soon found that Fred Manning was not the man for me. While my heart seemed to cling to him, yet, after my brother talked with me, I saw very easily the strength of his logic, and questions of doubt arose in my mind. If I had *really* loved Fred judiciously there would have been no questionings within myself. Ah, had I had a strong, loving mother's hand to have directed me, all would have been different—if you had only been here, Jean. Poor brother George became helpless, standing between two fires, as it were."

"Well, Winona, since there is no backward track—no returning, there is but this left to do: suffer, conquer. I see you are straining your eyes looking down on your husband instead of looking up to him. In other words, you have 'comprehended' Fred. You should have, with your disposition,

married a man in whom each day you would have made new discoveries in the beauties of a grand character. Now, what is it that you find wanting in him?"

"The first few weeks of our married life he was all devotion. He never came home without bringing a little paper sack of fruit or bon-bons. Were I a confectioner, or fruit vender, I believe I could tell how long a man has been married about as accurately as the almanac. Those little attentions did not last long. He soon realized that he possessed me. That seemed to him sufficient—'why should he court me any longer,' I suppose he argued. He would go away to enjoy himself at the club or theatre, night after night, leaving me alone, expecting to find me awaiting on his return with a smile and ready to administer to his wants, as any other piece of furniture in the house. I tried to sing, play, read aloud, or chat with him, to make his evenings pleasant; but the billiard and card table, and the rapid society of the club room proved stronger attractions than my modest self. How deluded are young girls who believe in a wife's influence to *make* a character for her husband! Where there are exceptions, they only prove the general rule. Then he is cruel to me sometimes, when intoxicated. Oh, how bitter was my awakening! I had pictured it all so different. I found I had *never* loved Fred Manning. I loved what he *seemed* to me to be. I had rather he would strike

me a blow, as a master does his pet dog in a moment of impatience, loving him the next, than to always so cruelly neglect me. I understand better now the lines and expressions of people's faces. How many of them are married unhappily, but are too proud to let the world know it. Tied by the law, but divorced in their hearts in the sight of God, they are living every day a horrible lie! God hasten the day when there shall be a lessening of such a terrible social evil."

"You think, then, there is a remedy for it?"

"Most assuredly. If it does not prove altogether efficacious, it will in a great measure mitigate it. As regards the position and sphere of woman, I am prophetic. The conventional and conservative men and women of to-day would have no patience, and show no deference to my broad ideas could they hear me speak. Our old school teaches the sentimental 'lady' idea of sitting down and holding one's hands. I believe a woman can have strength of purpose, without boldness of manner; then, why not make herself independent? From a child they should be trained, not to depend upon marriage as a necessity of life. Teach them, rich or poor, to *do* something, to fill their lives and minds with strong thoughts and works. Teach them there is something higher than merely making themselves 'attractive' to men, in the social phrase. Teach them to school their sensibilities and curb their impulses. Show them that the mature maiden of

twenty-five or thirty summers, with force of character and mind, is not really passée as many crude circles of society would have them, but just at the beginning of her fulness of attractiveness.

"Show them how each year's experience and increase of knowledge is to such a one an additional charm, placing her upon a pedestal for youth to look up to, and relinquishing that royal position only by her free will. Teach them to regard matrimony as a high, holy calling that will come to them through the guidance of Providence in due time, without their idly sitting, longing and waiting for it. Teach them to be wise matrons; then, they will be equal to doing something more than merely rocking the cradle—they will make a grand man or woman out of the weak, crying babe in it. I do not mean for woman to usurp the position or engross the various callings of men, but give her the right to think and act for herself. That she is weaker, physically, than man, is evident; that she is his superior morally, is conceded; that she is not his equal mentally, is doubtful. That decision should be reserved until she has had the same advantages of higher education and larger liberties that men have enjoyed for so many years. Then they will be self-sustaining, and when she is no longer specialized—no longer made to form mere wheels in the social system—allowed to assert and sustain her individuality, then will she not resort to matrimony merely to have a home provided

for her, or escape the dreaded appellation 'old maid.' Her matrimonial unions will be founded on a firmer basis of intellectuality, pride, congeniality, and with love as the corner stone."

"I do not just understand your bringing in pride at that point, Winona."

"My dear Jean, you have often heard it quoted that "true love is grounded on esteem." I have revised it to suit myself into "lasting love is founded on pride." There is no man or woman happy in their marriage, unless they can with *pride* say—"this is my wife—this is my husband."

"Yes, I see now. You have put the idea in an original and strong light."

"Jean, away in the eastern horizon, angels of dawn have already spread their white wings, heralding the coming of a new era for woman. I rejoice at the prospect. With her progression, man too, will be lifted up. His pride alone will nerve him to look to his laurels, so that the 'weaker sex,' as he regards her, does not share them. How my ambition causes me to fret and long when I think of what I might have been—what I scarcely now can hope to be! I remind myself of a maimed horse, with mettle in his bones, stabled near the race-course. He paws and looks out of his barred window, with a piteous neigh, upon the other horses that fly around the track with outstretched neck, ears laid back and extended tail—on and on to glory! He looks beyond to a green pasture, where

others dance and toss their rippled manes with a free grace. How he longs to go, but his restlessness avails nothing. He must make the best of his narrow, lonely quarters, existing upon the hope that the door may yet be opened, when he can go forth."

"I am glad to see, Winona, that you have the idea of making the best of your situation. It is a wise conclusion."

"Yes, my dear friend, I am trying, and will continue, God being my helper. I pray to him so earnestly to fill my life with something, anything, to take away this aching void. I used to find such joy in my music. I love it now more dearly than ever, but its minor chords seem to have a deep wound buried in their souls, that I never discovered before, making my heart to cry in sympathy. If only my mocking-bird would sing more cheerful ditties; but I suppose he is imitating me. I love the pathetic in song. If only my flowers in the garden would bloom faster and more profusely; they are to me like people. We have long conversations together every morning. Their language is so pure and sweet. My affectionate greyhound is always a comforting companion to me; but my greatest joy is visiting a poor widow's family over the hill yonder —she has to work so hard, and has so many little ones. I teach the children an hour a day to read. They seem to love me so, and make me feel my life is not altogether useless. I go in society but little.

Fred's salary is small and I dress very simply. He doesn't seem to know how to manage judiciously. He has just paid an extravagant sum for a fine setter dog, when we are behind in the house rent. By the way, Fred is invited to W. next week, to join a hunting party, and I'm to go with him. The Colonel's oldest son will also have two of his old schoolchums from West Point with him. I do so enjoy W. The Colonel and his family are such cordial, hospitable people. They are so cultivated and refined, that it isn't necessary for them to flaunt their crest for one to tell they belong to a line of nobility."

And so the two friends chatted away, until the twilight, when Jean hurried away, telling Winona to "keep a brave heart," and promising to come often.

CHAPTER IX.

THE next week found Winona again at W. The cook was kept busy, baking pound-cake, boiling ham and baking potato custards for the expected visitors. Old Aunt Beckie's curiosity caused her to scorch the shape of the smoothing iron on the front of one of the Colonel's best tucked shirts, as Jerry drove up with two strange gentlemen in the carriage. Said she wanted to see if dem Yankees looked like dey did endurin' de war. Winona and the Colonel's daughter stood peeping through the parlor blinds as the guests alighted. Then followed a general confusing introduction, when each one didn't just catch the name of some other one.

"Who is the young lady in brown?" questioned one of the strangers.

"Oh, I beg your pardon; I hadn't noticed that Winona was in the room," answered the Colonel, who turned and saw her sitting modestly in an inconspicuous corner.

"Mrs. Manning, allow me the pleasure of presenting Mr. Lawrence De Movil," he said.

"We southerners have a custom of shaking hands," said Winona, extending hers to him, while

her red lips parted in a becoming smile over her white teeth.

Lawrence De Movil, a man of splendid physique and classic features, received Winona's cordiality with grace; then took a seat beside her. The two soon lost sight of the others, absorbed in their conversation. During the evening, Winona sang and played. Mr. De Movil was a great lover of music and sang also. His voice was sweet and sympathetic, and accorded well with Winona's.

"He is as interesting as his name is attractive. Its aristocratic tone is in keeping with his appearance. Why does Fred appear so insignificant by the side of such a man? Oh, it is sinful in me to make such a comparison—Fred is my *husband.* Oh, God, forgive me," said Winona, as she sat on the floor, after a habit of hers, slowly unbuttoning her shoes to retire that night.

Through fate and circumstances, Mr. De Movil and Winona were frequently thrown together during their visit. One day when the men-folk had gone hunting, she took a copy of Matthew Arnold's poems and sat down on the rustic seat, under the large oak—her favorite spot. There she sat reading for awhile; then, looking away with a sad, meditative expression, as if something in the contents of the book had set her thinking seriously. She wore a simple dress of white flannel and a large straw hat, with a scarf of pale blue about the crown.

"How beautiful she looks! What refinement of

feature, and expression of intellect and character! What a shame that such a grand woman—for she is a grand woman—should be mated with such mediocrity! She is as far above her husband as the heaven is above the earth, and quite as far beyond his appreciation. She reminds me of a stately lily ; so lovely in nature, while he treats her as if she were a disagreeable gourd blossom." At this point of his soliloquy, Winona raised her eyes from her book to see Lawrence De Movil sitting on a step at the front gate, intently gazing at her. The color rushed to her cheeks. Lawrence saw he was caught in the act, and he, too, felt a bit embarrassed. He rose, with an effort, and limped towards her.

"Why, have you lamed yourself?" She spoke out in a tone of interest, as he came nearer, then sat down beside her, dropping his gun and hunting bag on the ground.

"Oh, no;" he answered, endeavoring to speak pleasantly, with an expression of pain ; "it's only an old sprain of the ankle that is troubling me. It comes from having walked too much while out hunting. It annoyed me so I had to leave the boys and come back. I sat down on the steps there to rest, it was paining me so."

"Had you not better let me get you some liniment?" timidly suggested Winona.

"Oh, no, thank you ; it will pass away soon, if I sit here quietly. What are you reading? "The Buried Life," he questioned and answered, taking

the volume off the seat, where it was lying, and opening it at the book mark. "That sounds interesting. I am not very familiar with Matthew Arnold's writings. What is his style?"

"Well, he isn't one of the sublime bards of his art, but one whose poetry, while more humble, gushes from his heart as a pure, crystal stream flows from a mountain spring, and cools a thirsty soul."

The pained expression had left Lawrence De Movil's face—he had forgotten himself. "Would you mind reading aloud a selection? I enjoy so much listening—the poem you were reading—I like its title."

Winona took the book and began reading in a low, sweet voice and southern accent:

"THE BURIED LIFE.

Light flows our war of mocking words, and yet
Behold, with tears my eyes are wet;
I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll.
Yes, yes, we know that we can jest;
We know, we know that we can smile;
But there's a something in this breast
To which thy light words bring no rest,
And thy gay smiles no anodyne.
Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,
And turn those limpid eyes on mine,
And, let me read there, love, thy inmost soul.
Alas, is even love too weak
To unlock the heart, and let it speak?
Are even lovers powerless to reveal
To one another what indeed they feel?

I knew the mass of men concealed
Their thoughts, for fear that if revealed
They would by other men be met
With blank indifference, or with blame reproved;
I knew they lived and moved,
Tricked in disguises, alien to the rest
Of men and alien to themselves—and yet,
The same heart beats in every human breast.
But we, my love—does a like spell benumb
Our hearts—our voices?—must we too be dumb?
Ah! well for us, if even we,
Even for a moment, can yet free
Our hearts and have our lips unchained:
For that which seals them hath been deep ordained.
Fate which foresaw
How frivolous a baby man would be,
By what distractions he would be possessed,
How he would pour himself in every strife,
And well nigh change his own identity,
That it might keep from his capricious play
His genuine self, and force him to obey,
Even in his own despite, his being's law,
Bade through the deep recesses of our breast
The unregarded River of our Life,
Pursue with indiscernible flow its way;
And that we should not see
The buried stream, and seem to be
Eddying about in blind uncertainty,
Though driving on with it eternally.
But often, in the world's most crowded streets,
But often, in the din of strife,
There rises an unspeakable desire
After the knowledge of our buried life;
A thirst to spend our fire and restless force
In tracking out our true original course;
A longing to inquire
Into the mystery of this heart that beats
So wild, so deep, in us; to know

Whence our thoughts come, and where they go.
And many a man in his own breast then delves,
But deep enough, alas, none ever mines :
And we have been on many thousand lines,
And we have shown on each, talent and power,
But hardly have we, for one little hour,
Been on our own line, have we been ourselves ;
Hardly had skill to utter one of all
The nameless feelings that course through our breast,
But they course on forever unexpressed.
And long we try in vain to speak and act
Our hidden self, and what we say and do
Is eloquent, is well—but 'tis not true.
And then we will no more be racked
With inward striving, and demand
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour
Their stupefying power ;
Ah ! yes, and they benumb us at our call :
Yet still, from time to time, vague and forlorn,
From the soul's subterranean depth upborne,
As from an infinitely distant land,
Come airs and floating echoes, and convey
A melancholy unto all our day.
Only—but this is rare—
When a beloved hand is laid in ours,
When, jaded with the rush and glare
Of the interminable hours,
Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,
When our world-deafened ear
Is by the tones of a loved voice caressed,—
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast,
And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again :
The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,
And what we mean, we say, and what we would, we know;
A man becomes aware of his life's flow,
And hears its winding murmur, and he sees
The meadows where it glides, the sun, the breeze.
And there arrives a lull in the hot race

Wherein he doth forever chase
That flying and elusive shadow, Rest;
And an air of coolness plays upon his face,
And an unwonted calm pervades his breast.
And then he thinks he knows
The Hills where his life rose,
And the Sea where it goes . . ."

Just as Winona finished reading the first autumn leaf detached from the branch above her head, and wafted itself down upon the page of the open book in her hands. "A period to mark the end of the poem," she said, with a faint smile. "What makes the leaves turn," she went on abruptly, without waiting for Lawrence to comment on the poetry, turning the leaf in her fingers.

He smiled at her originality, while admiring her investigating turn of mind and tact. "I believe there is an old-fashioned idea," he replied, "that it is caused by frost, but I was reading an article not long since, that said the green matter in the tissue of a leaf is composed of two colors—red and blue. When the sap ceases to flow in the Fall and the natural growth of the tree ceases, oxidation of the tissue takes place. Under certain conditions the green of the leaf changes to red; under different conditions, it takes on a yellow, or brown tint. The difference in color is due to the difference in combination of the original constituents of the green tissue, and to the varying conditions of climate, exposure and soil. It is also said that a dry,

cold climate produces more brilliant foliage than one that is damp and warm. Maples and oaks have the brightest colors."

Winona listened to his botanical explanation with interest, at the same time leaning forward to watch a tiny tragedy of insect life being enacted on a blade of grass at her feet.

"The Autumn is a glorious season in spite of her sad eyes," she said. "I love the stately fields of golden rod; the gray skirting clouds and the far away expression in the shine of the sun."

"While I admire nature, still I don't think man is always so perceptive of the poetry in such things as woman, with her refined senses. I must admit I like Autumn particularly for the sport it brings. I am fond of hunting," said Lawrence De Movil, giving his head a little twist to one side, lending zest to his words.

"I have always regarded it as cruel in a measure. It looks hard to kill such innocent creatures, and they always look at you with such a piteous, dying expression. I attempted to wring a chicken's neck once, when a child, but as I was vigorously whirling it around, a horror of murder, taught me at Sunday-school, rushed over me. I screamed for Cindy, my black mammy, to come to the rescue, while holding the half dead chicken at arm's length. As she took it from me, and with one jerk severed its head, leaving the body hopping and flopping, with the blood dripping from its neck, I ran away and cried for an

hour. Some years after, I survived that shock sufficiently to go 'possum hunting, but as our party "treed" nothing but persimmons, my conscience escaped."

As Winona talked, Lawrence De Movil regarded her intently, thinking: "How unlike the studied artificial woman of the world he so often met. How queenly in her bearing, yet what a natural, sweet womanliness in her nature."

Winona felt his gaze; her cheeks colored again. Color was so becoming to her, and she so seldom had it. Lawrence thought her, at that moment, the most beautiful woman he had even seen.

"How do you train your dogs to hunt?" she said as artlessly as a child.

Lawrence gave a deep, audible sigh.

"Does your ankle pain you again?" she said, turning suddenly, and looking him in the face. What a strange expression, thought Winona, as he gazed without seeing, into space.

"Oh, yes," he said suddenly, coming to himself, "about training dogs. Well, it can be commenced in puppyhood to an extent. By the time the youngster is three or four months old, he can be instructed to "come to whistle" and "charge at command." The best way to get a dog under control, is to use a check cord attached to his collar. The other end is held by the breaker. He lets the puppy run at will, then when he blows the whistle at the same time twitches the cord. This method,

I think, preferable to the whip, as a dog, is by the latter, often made "whip-shy." He will soon learn to come at whistle. His next lesson is the "down-charge." In this, his head is placed on the ground between the fore-paws and the command "charge" given. A raising of the breaker's right hand will soon be all that is necessary instead of using the voice, so disturbing to game. Then follows pointing; backing; dropping to shot, or at wing; retrieving, etc., all to be accomplished by patience and kindness, studying and treating the dog's disposition much as man's."

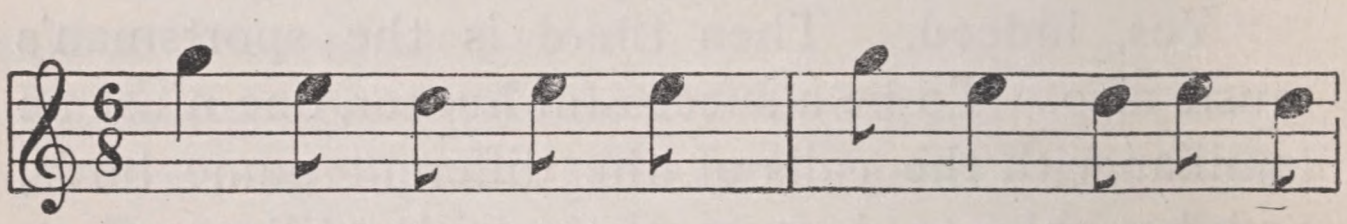
"I see there is art, as well as blood, in the sport," remarked Winona, smiling.

"Yes, indeed. Then there is the sportsman's music also. To be a successful hunter, one must be familiar with the calls of the different game birds, and be able to imitate them with telling effect. Take the quail—in Summer he is busy with domestic life, keeping his mate company as she fosters their young. At that season, his voice is rich and sweet, suggestive of affection. You know his familiar summer song—"Bob White." In the Winter you have noticed when the birds are full grown and gathered in coveys, the quail has another beautiful call; it is the bugle call, as it were, of the leader, sounded to assemble the birds scattered by the hunter to a selected rendezvous. I think his winter call more metallic than the other."

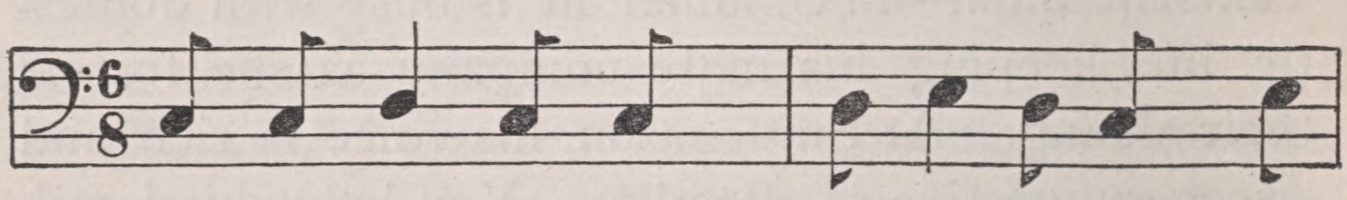
Just then the great dinner bell rang out summon-

ing Winona and Lawrence to the dining-room. That evening the guests were entertained in a novel way by the darkies. The latter gathered in the back yard. Jerry and old Uncle Dick picked on their banjos, keeping time with both head and feet, while the others would pat and dance. They would "shuffle the back step," "doce all," "kick the high step," "hop light ladies," "swing dem partners," to the merriment of all, until dizzy and exhausted. By special request, old Uncle Dick sang, while picking the accompaniment on his banjo and patting his foot:

BRUDDER RABBIT.



"Hey! Brudder Rabbit, yer looks mighty thin."



"Yes, bress Gord, I b'en er skeetin t'rough de win'.

"Hey, brudder Rabbit, yer years mighty long."
"Yes, bress Gord, dey's put on wrong."

"Hey, brudder Rabbit, yer foot's mighty brown."
"Yes, bress Gord, dey kin kiver ober groun'."

After a little rest, squatted on the grass, they all together, began singing some of their darkey songs. The mellow light of a full October moon fell upon

them, making a picturesque scene. They sang in a weird strain. The autumn leaves wrote upon the earth in mystic shadow runes. All nature seemed to drowse in dreams. Winona sat looking at the night mists that veiled the distant tree tops—the moonlight streaming in her face. She knew Lawrence De Movil was near her—somehow she could feel his presence without seeing him. "They are natural musicians," she said, still gazing into the mists without turning her head. "There's a strange melody in their voices unlike other people's. Their music makes one sad."

"Oh, God!" Lawrence De Movil whispered feelingly into the ear of the night—abruptly excused himself on account of indisposition, and retired for the evening. The next morning he was out early. He thought no one would be stirring save the servants. As he walked upon the front piazza he found Winona sitting there. A simultaneous, "Why!" escaped their lips, as their eyes met.

"You are up early," said Winona, with affected ease.

"Yes, I had no thought to find any one else so ambitious. I didn't rest well, and thought an early morning walk might relieve my headache. And what waked you with the lark?"

"I like to see the sunrise sometimes. I don't understand why poets expatiate so largely on sunset, and slight sunrise. It affords an equally grand theme with its millions of shining and twinkling

dewdrops, speaking in golden eloquence to every living thing, seeming to say—'awake! awake! the day is here!' It is an hour of exhilaration. Even to the dead it seems to give encouragement." Winona turned her head towards the rose-garden and pointed her finger to the family burying ground. "I saw the first bright ray kiss that white shaft yonder, an affectionate good morning, a moment ago, seeming to say—'yet a little while.'"

"You have a great soul for glory, Mrs. Manning," said Lawrence, dwelling on the word great, while abstractly tapping the toe of his boot with his cane.

"Thank you. Did you enjoy the darkies singing last night? It's too bad you had to retire before they had finished."

"Yes, I was sorry to go. That style of music is entirely new to me; I enjoyed it very much. Speaking of darkies, Mrs. Manning," said Lawrence De Movil, leaning forward with a tone of interest in his voice, "there is a great misunderstanding existing between the north and south."

"Oh, I am so glad you have introduced that subject, Mr. De Movil, I have wanted to talk of it several times, but feared it might be offensive to you. I never discuss politics and religion with people of different convictions from myself. They are dangerous grounds for fencing; but this time, I am glad of the opportunity to speak; but first let me hear you."

"Well, perhaps, I should preface my remarks by

saying, I am a "down yankee" and a "stanch republican," using the terms of you southerners; but I do not allow my heart to dry up like a last year's apple that still clings to a tree, from difference of opinion or prejudice. From my association with southern boys at school and from reading, not having narrowed myself to the statements and like of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," as some of my people I regret to say, have done, I knew I would find here people on equality morally, mentally, but not financially since the war, with those of the north; yet, I must admit I am somewhat surprised at the state of affairs in some respects. There is a prevalent idea in the north that the southern white man domineers the negro even though he is now free. That, I find untrue. I have questioned them, and they tell me they vote as they like in politics, and express themselves according to conviction without interference. I find he has access to all the avenues of labor and progression, the same as the white man. That social equality should be denied him, I readily understand. Until the negro can, through generations of inherited culture, claim that position by might of right, it should not be expected or tolerated; even then, I believe miscegenation of the two races would be improbable, being violative of nature's laws from the beginning. I have visited the negro and studied him in his squalid shanty wherever I have stopped in the south. They impress me as a shiftless class; good-natured; happy and contented, if they have

sufficient corn-bread, fat meat and black molasses for a day's sustenance, with but little thought for the morrow. Some of them, I find, with a fair education, but many are so devoid of ambition and appreciation they would not accept it if offered. What to do, for the best, with them, is a mighty problem."

"Yes, Mr. De Movil, it is a mighty problem, the solving of which involves not only the welfare of our sunny south, but this entire, American people. This race question is the muddy stream that flows between two great factions, alienating their shores, which, if united, could be made a unit of Olympian power among the nations of the earth. As you say, there is a great misunderstanding. Your puritan fathers sold to our cavalier sires the first slaves we ever had. When they came to us, they were fresh from the 'dark continent;' ignorant, in very truth barbaric; yet, that so called dark continent has advantages most superior in climate and soil. Time has proven that its people lack the disposition and ability to improve those natural facilities at their hands. I often think they must be direct descendants of Cain, who was himself, but a simple working man—a tiller of the field, when God cursed him, and set a mark upon him, for the killing of his brother Abel. To-day, the southern negroes, while shiftless as a class, are in a much higher state of civilization and with a few exceptions, they are not so prosperous now, as before the war; their methods

of living are evidence of that fact. That is easily explained. It is natural to suppose the slaveholder would protect the interests of his own property. If they were endowed with executive ability, surely they ought to be in a better condition now in their freedom. It seems, too, they would now dislike their old masters, if they had been their oppressors. Go among them to-day, and see how many of them still hover about their "ole marster" or "missus," as chickens nestle under the shadow of the mother's wing, even after they are too large to be covered. Ask them why they linger; they will tell you "love!" It pleases the north to call us rebelious. We do not so consider it, and have no apology to offer for defending our rights. The negro did not cry out "oppression" and stretch their arms to you for help. We did not solicit your interference or assistance in managing our affairs; you came deliberately and demanded we should act in accordance with your convictions.

"But, Mrs. Manning, we were doing what we believed would be the best for our country at large."

"Ah, yes, I know your banner bore the legend "in the cause of Right," and ours waved in the cause of "Justice." Remember, the slave dealers of Newport and Boston had sold to our ancestors those slaves; you, their descendants, had the purchase money for them, in your pockets, and then demanded we should give them up without recom-

pense. That meant to many, they must suffer, and all but starve. It wasn't an inviting prospect. No wonder we contended at the point of the bayonet. But what is done cannot be undone. It is not for us to discuss so much what was, was not, and might have been done, or the right and wrong of it, but as members of the same government, think of what is best for its development and unity. You see we have here an incompetent race which was freed penniless, leaving us, at the same time, depressed in many ways. Since they are among us, humanity demands we help them. They are a great burden and annoyance to the south in their present condition. You at the north have no conception of our position. You stand on the opposite shore of that muddy stream and throw pebbles into it, that start circles that widen and break on the shores in waves of discontent. Your army fought for the Union. In name we have it, but in reality, that stream yet divides the north and south. A few narrow canoes, with a single oarsman, cross from shore to shore. Some of their minds are as narrow as their canoes and their hearts as shallow. Their version of affairs is false. I make no distinction of section in this assertion; the blame is upon the south as well as the north. So long as such dissenters are listened to, we cannot hope for more amicable relationships. There are some in the north who believe from their false reports, that we have here, arms stacked, thirsty for blood and ready to fight again at a word.

While every southerner feels keenly what he suffered and lost, tell them when you return, that we have not had time to sit down and harbor only malice. Our strongest thoughts and energies have been turned to melting those arms and moulding them into plough-shares and carpenters' tools. Tell them to come as you have done, and see for themselves, for, only in that way will many believe. They will recognize the stupenduousness of this race question. They will also realize that, to us, who best understand the black man, who have been reared with him, and with whose interests ours are so closely linked, remains its wisest solving, needing in that their kind patience and sympathy. Then when that stream is bridged over, and not till then, will there be in truth, a prosperous United States. There will be no north, no south, only in the geographies. The shortest road to true national fraternity is for the general Government to "Hands off" this question, or as the French express it, *Laissez faire.* The railroads running into this section are instruments of great good in this cause. As they increase, the faster our hopes for harmony will be realized. What a wealth of industries and mining they will awaken that now are latent in our glorious south! Their benefits will touch the four points of the compass. Ah, that word misunderstood! How much meaning it contains. Some one has said, and he must have been a great man himself, or he could not have spoken so feelingly, to be misunderstood,

even by those whom one loves, is the cross and bitterness of life. It is the secret of that sad and melancholy smile on the lips of great men which so few understand. God is the great misunderstood; the least comprehended. Then, surely we should have patience and courage. But I am keeping you from your walk. I see Jerry has finished feeding the horses. Breakfast will be ready soon; I'll go and wake Fred now."

Excusing herself, Winona went in.

The next day the guests at W—— took their departure. Winona and Fred kept them company as far as Nashville.

"Have this seat, Mr. De Movil; I believe I'll go into the smoking car for a smoke," said Fred, rising, and offering his camp stool on the back platform, to Lawrence De Movil, who stood in the car doorway, chatting to him and Winona. Lawrence thanked Fred and sat down beside Winona. Neither spoke for several moments.

"I shall never forget this visit to W——," at last said Lawrence earnestly.

"It has, indeed, been delightful," lightly replied Winona, looking away as she generally did when talking to him. Then came another silence, broken only by the monotonous rumbling of the car wheels.

"Mrs. Manning, what makes a friend?" suddenly said Lawrence, giving her one of those penetrating looks that always made her heart sink.

"Why, I suppose it is the result of long acquaint-

ance, propinquity and intimate knowledge of one another," she said, assuming an indifferent tone.

"Yes, generally; yet, have you never met one, perhaps for a few hours or days, who left an impression that would remain for years?"

"Rarely," said Winona, glancing uneasily into the car, wishing Fred would come.

"I do not mean love, of course," he added, "but affinity of disposition." Winona breathed with relief. "There is such satisfaction in such companionship. As you say, we meet such ones rarely. We may live with people for years, respecting them, doing many acts of courtesy, yet we approach them just so far and no farther. Why the reserve in us, we can't tell. To the rare ones our affection is spontaneous; we may part after our first meeting with them, never to see one another again, perhaps, but they will remain forever in memory."

Here the engine gave a long, loud whistle that interrupted their conversation. The train was rolling into Nashville. When Lawrence spoke again his voice was low, rich, and full of sympathy. "How I wish we could choose our friends and keep them with us forever! How tiresome to associate continually with those who are not congenial to us! Ah, but that is life. Mrs. Manning, I hope sincerely we have not met for the last time. You are to me one of those rare ones of whom we have just spoken."

"Thank—" here the car gave a terrible jerk, cut-

ting short Winona's reply, and almost pitching her off the camp stool. Lawrence De Movil grasped her hand to support her, and pressed it impulsively to his bosom, that rose and fell with deep breaths. His touch caused her heart to sink with a strange sensation. She withdrew her hand quickly, unable to speak. The wind was bathing her face, and she caught her breath with a gasp, her hair swept back from her beautiful forehead.

"Tell me, won't you, of what you are thinking?" said Lawrence De Movil in a low tone of pleading, that again made the chills creep over Winona.

"The chase of the trees," she answered, as if speaking more to herself than to him, as she gazed at the trees that seemed to move and crowd upon each other as the train sped along.

"I must gather up my traps; we will be at the depot in a little while," she added, endeavoring with a desperate effort to be her natural self. As Winona turned into the doorway, she heard Lawrence repeat to himself the words—"the chase of the trees."

At the depot there was a general confused and hurried "good-bye." "God bless and keep you!" Lawrence whispered, as he shook Winona's hand.

"I have to stop here on business," said Fred, as he passed the club.

Winona walked home alone, keeping her eyes fixed upon the ground and passing many of her friends without seeing them. As she reached home

and unlocked the front door, a vault-like dark and cool greeted her. She went straight to her room and fell upon her knees at her bedside. Clasping her hands and raising her eyes to the ceiling, she prayed aloud: "Jehovah, Thou mighty God, who art in power seated, hear me, for to Thee I pray. Look down, O Lord, from heaven on this Thy child, for I am desolate. The troubles of my heart overcome me! Draw me nearer, O Father, that I may cast my earth-born cares on Thee—that I may be uplifted by Thy Omnipotent Hand. Send Thy Holy Spirit, the Comforter, into my heavy soul. Guide me—O lead, Kindly Light—" here Winona bowed her head upon her hands, and remained supplicating in silence for a long while. . . .

Another year of Winona's weary, monotonous existence had dragged itself away. A little bright-eyed stranger from babyland lay in her arms, cooing and looking up into her loving face. Her tender, womanly expression seemed intensified since his coming. He awakened in her feelings of affection, the depth and fulness of which she had never even dreamed of before. A new smile lighted her countenance. What a joy and blessing the angel of life brought with the tiny one, and placed in her bosom! It filled there a great void that had long throbbed and throbbed with pain. Fred seemed proud, too, and came home more regularly now. Winona hoped so earnestly that the baby would prove a strong influence to make Fred do

better, for he had been drinking heavily of late. Happiness with her smiles seemed to stand before Winona for a moment, so near she could almost reach out and clasp her hand. Alas, only for a moment she stood, then faded, as fades a delusive shadow cast by a magic lantern, leaving in its place the ghost of a grinning skeleton. It was just a year to the day since that ride with Lawrence De Movil on the platform of the car. She had never seen him since. She only heard through the Colonel's son that he had gone to live in the far west. The express brought a package marked to Winona, which she opened wonderingly. It contained a great nugget of gold in its natural state. Here and there a spot was polished on which was engraved a tree, the leaves being studded with tiny diamonds. There was no card—nothing to tell from whom or where it came. But Winona's heart whispered the words—"Lawrence De Movil remembering the chase of the trees," to her buried life.

"I'll show it to Fred as soon as he comes. How lovely!" she exclaimed.

It was midnight. Winona sat by the smouldering fire, humming sweet lullabies while nestling her darling babe to her breast. Fred entered. She made no comment on the lateness of the hour, but held up the lump of gold as he opened the door, saying cheerfully: "See, a gold paper weight set with diamonds. There was no card to tell the

name of the sender; but I imagine it was Mr. Lawrence De Movil. I guess it came from his California mine we have heard about. Wasn't it kind of him to send it?"

"Liar!" said Fred, fiercely, "you have been untrue to me! You have been secretly corresponding with this man, and, no doubt, others. You are a living Delilah! Your place is with the dogs. Take that!" he said, seizing the water pitcher from a table near, and hurling it with a madman's fury at Winona, who sat trembling with fright, as she recognized after she had spoken that Fred was crazy with liquor. The whirling pitcher missed its aim, but oh, horrors! struck with a heavy blow the head of the innocent slumbering babe in her arms. The little sleeper never once opened his eyes. The cruel blow interrupted a dream smile that played about his cupid-bow mouth. There was a quivering of the tiny limbs with an occasional spasmodic movement. Winona's screams were so sharp with anguish they cut to Fred's heart, bringing him to himself somewhat. He seemed to realize what he had done, for he called on the name of the Lord, as he bent over his child with an anxious look.

"Go! for God's sake fly for a doctor!" cried Winona.

When Fred had gone out, a death-like stillness filled the room. The lights ceased their dancing and burnt in a steady, serious blaze. Winona's pitiful moans and prayers were all that broke the mid-

night silence, as she hovered over her suffering pet. His pulse was weak and irregular. Sometimes all sign of life would vanish for a moment. Every uncertain rustle of the curtain would cause her to start and listen, but it was not Fred or the doctor. An hour passed and still no one came. Winona became almost frantic. She thought of going to awaken some of the neighbors, but her darling might die alone while she was away. "Surely," she said, "Fred realized, and would come back." At last he did come, and brought with him the doctor.

"I can do nothing," said the latter, sadly; your baby is now a cherub, about the Master's Throne." Then he hurried away to another urgent case.

"Oh, don't tell me hell is a *place!* No, it is *here! here!!*" groaned Fred in agony, smiting his breast with a tortured expression. "Every man makes his own heaven or hell; I realize now, but alas, too late! too late!! Oh, Winona, you are too good and pure for a wretch like me! I see it—I see it! Ah! how true, 'the sins of the father are visited upon the children'—my sweet innocent child! I'll go for your brother George and Jean, now," Fred said. abruptly, almost rushing from the room. Then came another stretch of horrible waiting for Winona, alone with death.

It was almost daybreak. Winona heard the hollow sounds of footsteps along the front pavement. She ran anxiously to the door to open it, but only to be disappointed. She saw by the pale, gray

light, it was a colored man passing. She called to him in her despair and begged him to go for her brother George, wondering what could have become of Fred.

When George Hardeman reached his sister, the red sun was just rising in the east behind an angry cloud, as if nature had waked with a frown of displeasure on her brow. The gas jet still burned in Winona's room, made sickly by the glare of day. The scene that confronted him was heartrending. Sitting in a chair Winona held her dead child close against her breast without a word. She looked as if she had turned to marble, so white and still was she. In her eye a single tear welled up from a depth known only to those who have lost their first-born. But an additional horror was yet in store for her. George Hardeman sent some one to hunt for Fred. An hour later, he was brought home a bloody corpse.

"We found him lying at the back door of the "Bonanza Saloon," with a pistol in his hand and a bullet through his temple," said one.

"Suicide!!" shrieked Winona. "Oh, what a *curse* is liquor! Forgive him, Oh God, for he did not know what he was doing!" she prayed.

Father and child were put away to their final rest in the same grave. A few weeks after the burial, Winona again sat by Jean's side; her hand clasped in Jean's sympathetic one.

"Ah, dear Jean," said Winona, with deep lines of

care in her sweet face, "they say a woman is never a woman until her heart is broken—I am a *woman* now! *experience* has made me one!"

"Yes, Winona, and to be a woman, you must also be brave."

"I have realized that. I am trying to be. Already I have undergone more than ever I dreamed I could. What miraculous power of endurance has woman! She is indeed the reed that bends under the storm, while the strong oak at her side is shattered. Where there is one woman commits suicide, there are three men, or more. Nor do they resort as men to tobacco, opium and whisky to beguile their hours or drown their sorrows."

"What you say is true, Winona. I have often thought of it as a strange fact. It seems the case should be reversed, since woman is so much weaker physically, and her chief calling in the world involving so much suffering and peril of life."

"Speaking of being brave, Jean, reminds me that I must be up and doing."

"What do you mean, Winona?"

"I mean that I am going to support myself. I have a modest income, but it is not sufficient to give me a comfortable living. I conld never content myself being dependent on my brother. He is generous, and I know will object seriously to my independent step. You know southern men's ideas on such subjects. But he has his own responsibilities, and then you know, I believe in honest work.

In it, one does not have so much time to brood and worry. 'Idleness always breeds discontent,' even though the coffer be full."

"Have you any formulated plans, Winona, as regards the course you will pursue?"

"No, as yet, they are in a chaotic state. At first I shall have to do what I can, not what I would like, perhaps."

"Well, I have an idea for you—at least, you might consider it. I have a dear friend in New York who is situated much like yourself; she does a great deal of literary work for a large publishing house. Now, through her, I believe I could assist you in getting illustrating to do on some of their weeklies or magazines."

"Oh, Jean, do you think it possible! How happy I would be! I want to leave here anyway—I want to try and forget!"

"Well," said Jean, "I will write immediately and see what the prospects are. Give me some of your best samples of drawing to enclose with my letter."

Winona waited anxiously for its answer. Its contents when it came, were most encouraging. "Tell your friend Mrs. Manning to come, dear Jean," it said. "I am sure I can help her to get *something* to do. One thing may lead to another and better. I well know how to sympathize with her."

"What a generous spirit has your friend, and what a loving heart is yours," said Winona, affectionately kissing Jean, tears of joy coursing her cheeks. "I

have heard cynics say, there was no such thing as true friendship. You have proven that assertion false by your faithfulness to me."

"Thank you, Winona; it does me great good to hear you say that, for you may yet need the faith I have inspired in friendship, to save you from infidelity, regarding the same. Not that you will not find others true, but as you have found pitfalls in love, so will you in friendship, and it will be your own judgment generally that must tell you where the ice is thin. In the new, broader path before you, there will be many such places. You will have to learn to avoid them."

"Oh, Jean, that means I must have more "*experience!*"

"Yes, Winona; experience is the chief ingredient in the making up of life."

"Well," replied Winona, "I have adopted this rule—to give every one the benefit of the doubt, treating them as a lady or gentleman until, they have proven themselves unworthy."

"Poor, dear child, for you are a child at heart still," said Jean, shaking her head significantly.

And so it was decided that Winona would go north at an early day.

CHAPTER X.

THE fresh laundried clothes, hanging from the lines stretched above the house-tops in New York City, were having a wild, fantastic dance in the November wind. In vain the smoke that curled up from the chimneys, endeavored to penetrate the low murky clouds. Eddies of dust frolicked upon the pavements. Winona stood, the wind entangled in her skirts and long black veil, pulling the bell knob of a West Fourteenth Street house.

"Is Mrs. Pearce in?" she said, addressing the chubby, red-faced woman, who opened the door, in answer to her ring.

"No, marm; but sha'll bay in derictly, marm. I suppose ye're the new coommer we've bane expectin'."

"Mrs. Manning is my name," said Winona.

"That is the sam'; just follow me if you plaze, marm. I'm the landlady, marm, and I'll show ye to ye rum," said the Irish woman, with a consequential air, leading the way up long stairs to a fourth-story room. It was small and had but one window, that overlooked a row of filthy, narrow

back yards. The furniture was old and scant, and the bed looked flat and hard.

"How cheerless," thought Winona, as she looked around; "yet I should be very grateful for even this," she consoled herself. She found Mrs. Pearce —Jean's friend—a sweet, frail woman, with a beautiful little flaxen-haired daughter. The three were soon like one family. Mrs. Pearce was also southern born—friendly and sympathetic in her nature.

"We go up here," said Mrs. Pearce to Winona, leading the way up the long stairs to a publishing house. Winona felt a bit nervous, as she mounted the steps, not knowing what the result of that visit would be. The boy at the head of the staircase anticipated Mrs. Pearce's mission, and extended his hand for their cards. Taking them, he went in, leaving the two chatting with the old gray-haired manuscript reader, who sat near the door, stamping glory or doom on the thousands of rolls that passed through his hands.

"Please walk into Mr. H.'s private office," said the boy, on his return.

Winona felt so strangely; the time she had so often thought of and hoped for had come at last. Mr. H. was most cordial in his manner.

"This is the friend of whom I spoke to you the other day," said Mrs. Pearce to Mr. H., after the usual courtesies.

"Ah, yes," replied Mr. H. "I am so sorry to have to disappoint you in regard to the position I

had expected to give to Mrs. Manning. The young lady who had it has suddenly decided to remain, leaving no vacancy just now." Winona's heart sank. As they were going out Mr. H. detained Mrs. Pearce a moment, saying in an undertone: "what a charming, magnetic woman, is Mrs. Manning. I think I will be able to help her to something in another establishment. I'll try, and let you know in a few days."

Thanking him, Mrs. Pearce joined Winona, who had a depressed expression. "Don't be disheartened," consoled Mrs. Pearce; "it is only one of the disappointments that frequently comes to us bread winners. Something may soon present itself; then you will be fully repaid for any little anxiety beforehand. You will have such a comfortable, independent feeling."

"Oh, I'm quite sure it will all come right," said Winona, endeavoring to brighten up, ashamed of herself for having for a moment lost courage.

Several days after a note came to Winona from Mr. H. saying: "Please call at the residence of Mr. Gerade, No. — Fifth Avenue, to-morrow, between the hours of twelve and one. I am almost sure he will give you the employment you desire. He is a millionaire, having large interests in several important periodicals, himself having retired, leaving the business to managers. A word from him would be sufficient to them."

Half-past twelve the following day found Winona

at the entrance of the Gerade mansion. There was a touch of timidity in her ring of the door-bell. An English porter in red waistcoat and black knickerbockers opened the door and invited her into an elegantly furnished parlor. A moment later she was ushered into the library where were Mr. and Mrs. Gerade. Mr. Gerade was a typical New Yorker—portly in mien, smooth shaven face, with the exception of English burnsides, fresh ruddy complexion and an air that stylish, neat clothes always lend. Mrs. Gerade was queenly in figure, with beautiful silver locks and a quaint, refined appearance, looking as if she had just stepped out of some antique picture frame. Both rose with a little look of surprise, to greet Winona, as she entered. They had not expected to see one so young and beautiful. Somehow they had construed the word "widow" in Mr. H.'s note, as meaning settled with care wrinkles and premature gray hair.

Winona's walk had tinged her cheeks with a delicate pink. Her thick, black veil was thrown back, making her beautiful face to look like a pearl set in onyx.

"Pardon my lying down," said Mrs. Gerade to Winona, reclining on a divan after greeting her. "I am an invalid these days."

Then Mr. Gerade and Winona chatted away on business. She explained to him that her idea was to get illustrating to do, at the same time keeping up her study in that line at the Cooper Institute, in

order to perfect herself and make her work more remunerative. During their conversation, Mrs. Gerade's maid, Teresa, entered with a dainty glass of Vin Marianne on a silver tray, handing it to her mistress. Teresa was a handsome woman about forty years old. She was, evidently, a German, from her type of beauty—fair complexion, rosy cheeks, blue eyes and light hair. Had she not worn the conventional white cap and apron, one would have mistaken her for a member of the Gerade family, for she was equally as aristocratic in bearing. Winona was busily engaged with Mr. Gerarde, and gave Teresa but little notice; but Teresa cast a glance at Winona, as she stood waiting for her mistress to take her tonic. She didn't notice that Mrs. Gerade had emptied the glass until she touched her hand as a reminder. The color came to Teresa's face at the thought of being so rude as to stare, for her eyes had indeed been riveted on their caller. Her color went as quickly as it came, as she turned and looked back at Winona as she reached the door, then went out.

Winona's call was most encouraging and pleasant. She would know its results in a few days. Mr. and Mrs. Gerade had seldom met one who so enlisted their sympathy and won their admiration, as did Winona. Mrs. Gerade insisted she should call again, adding that she so much enjoyed bright, agreeable company, as her health would not permit

her going out for recreation, in spite of her well appearance.

Several days later one of Mr. Gerade's managers called on Winona and made her a most satisfactory proposition, which she accepted gratefully and was soon at work in her new calling. It required no disagreeable business relationships with men. Most of her sketching was done at home in her own quiet, humble room, or at the Institute, and was generally sent, when completed, by a messenger, to the manager's office. Her life was secluded, with but little social element, giving most of her time and force to her art. She knew but few, and did not care to know others, as she was not situated to cultivate them or return their hospitalities. By nature, Winona was very social, and sometimes as she walked along with the surging throngs, looking into their strange faces, with never a friendly smile or bow for her, she felt as lonely as if treading a banquet hall deserted. Yet she consoled herself with the thought that it would not be so always. She had confidence in her ability and believed she would yet make an enviable placement for herself. She found such satisfaction in her pursuit. Besides Mrs. Pearce and her young daughter, the house where Winona roomed, afforded but little companionship. No one of means lived in that locality. There were many professional people there of limited reputation. On the same floor with her was Mrs. Pearce and her daughter: Miss Mays,

a stenographer, and Mr. Le Blanc, a young architect. Just beneath her was a Professor of the piano, with a homely wife older than himself and a half dozen young children. Winona wondered how a man with so much poetry in his soul could have admired such a woman for his wife. She knew poetry was in his composition by the way he played, even though the tones of the piano did come to her muffled by the floor between, making them to sound like a voice in a well. Then she passed his door one day and saw that the walls were decorated with lithographs of many of the great artists in his line and programmes of various musical organizations. A three-corner grand piano was the chief article of furniture in his room, at which he sat, with pompadored locks and gold-rimmed eye-glasses, making music to drown his cares, and the noise of his six fretting, boisterous children about him. "The picture tells its own story—Genius hand in hand with poverty," thought Winona. Mr. Le Blanc was a friend of Mrs. Pearce's. Through her Winona met him. One day, soon after, as she stood chatting with him in the hall-way, Miss Mays passed. Mr. Le Blanc was also a friend of Miss Mays. Immediately the latter assumed a friendly inclination to Winona. She took advantage of every opportunity to talk with her, and several times joined her as she was going out for a walk. She was so affable and patronizing on all occasions, and clothed her language with a subtle tone of sin-

cerity. She would compliment Winona by giving her confidence. As soon as she deemed it prudent she made Mr. Le Blanc a topic of conversation. She approached the subject in such a casual, "by-the-way" manner. Miss Mays had cleverly won Winona's friendship and confidence. Being so alone, it was a great pleasure for Winona, to feel there was some one so near in such harmony with herself. Mrs. Pearce was good and kind; she loved her dearly, but Miss Mays was her own age: there was in her the sympathy of youthful thoughts and ways. She had an indirect way of drawing out Winona's opinions without directly questioning her. She soon saw that Winona appreciated Mr. Le Blanc's talent, and that Mr. Le Blanc admired Winona for herself, with an intensity, yet always with a gentlemanly consideration for her widowhood, fearing to offend Winona's keen sense of propriety. In the mean time, Winona had called on Mrs. Gerade, as requested, and sent her a basket of violets, to show, in a delicate way, her appreciation of her husband's kindness. Her visit to Mrs. Gerade was to each mutually charming, Mrs. Gerade thought after Winona had gone, that if ever she had been blessed with a daughter she would have liked her to be a duplicate of Mrs. Manning. And Winona went away feeling that if her mother had lived she would have been like Mrs. Gerade. On Christmas eve an invitation came from Mrs. Gerade to Winona, asking her to take Christmas dinner with

them. On that day, at the appointed hour, the Gerade turnout rolled up to her modest abode and bore her to her friends.

Teresa smiled as if she was so glad to see Winona, and assisted her graciously in taking off her wraps.

"It was so good of Mrs. Gerade to send for me; I had thought to spend such a lonely, desolate day. One always thinks of home at Christmas, but I haven't any home now. I am like the birds that nestle wherever they can, to shield themselves from the cutting winds," said Winona, talking, partly to herself and partly to Teresa, as she stood over the register warming before going down-stairs. "Oh! pardon me," she added, as if waking from a dream, seeing two great tears coursing Teresa's cheeks; "I forget sometimes."

Teresa excused herself saying she would return in a moment to show her down-stairs.

Winona was surprised and touched by her sympathy and pleased with her manner. Somehow she looked to her out of place as a menial.

Winona made herself a most agreeable acquisition to the Gerade dinner-party—chatting pleasantly with all, being quick at repartee and quite equal to general topics of conversation. During the evening Mr. Gerade requested her to give them some music. Winona had not touched a piano or sung a note, since her great bereavement. She did not see how she could so control her feelings as to comply, but Mr. Gerade did not know her life's story, nor

did his guests. To attempt any explanation would be most awkward; to refuse Mr. Gerade without would be discourteous. Sitting to the piano, she determined to try. She first struck several heavy chords to strengthen her courage, then began playing as she had never played before. Volumes of feeling that surged through her soul, expressed themselves at her touch. The tones, for a moment would mourn and sob, trailing away into faint echoes, then suddenly cry aloud in despair, like a lost soul, praying for help. Again, they would leap with the fire of passion, causing trickling chills to creep over the listeners; then calm into sweetness, making one to think of moonlight and soft summer winds—a lover's night. Winona turned from the piano when she had finished, her eyes sparkling and cheeks aglow. She always felt her music so intensely. "Please excuse me from singing to-night; my voice is not quite itself," she said as the company looked at her with admiration, and insisted on an encore.

That evening fully established Winona into the good favor and strong friendship of Mr. and Mrs. Gerade. She soon became a regular visitor to their home. Mrs. Gerard claimed one night out of each week from her. Those nights were occasions of great pleasure to both, for though there was much difference in age, yet there was great congeniality of ideas with them. On bright days when Mrs. Gerade was feeling better, they would have a drive to the park together.

"Suppose we drive over to Greenwood Cemetery," suggested Mrs. Gerade, one balmy afternoon.

Winona was delighted, for she had never been there. As they drove past the many handsome monuments and costly vaults, Winona grew very serious.

"Why are you quiet," asked Mrs. Gerade.

"I was thinking of the significance of all this great array of marble, in the City of the Dead. As it is here, nearly every slab commemorates the tragedy—to be born—to struggle—to die! Read that inscription there—"Charles Laird, born June 3d, 1840; died April 9th, 1863." What a leaden weight that word "died," contains. It makes one feel as if that event was indeed the end of Charles Laird, and in truth it was, unless he did something for the uplifting of humanity, Here is another—"Rebecca Morse, born August 12th, 1833; Living for the Lord, in Him fell asleep, September 16th, 1874." What a soothing tone is in that; I like it better than the other. It changes the tragedy into a pleasing drama. If that inscription is true, Rebecca Morse is not dead; her body has only disappeared. She lives with more influence to-day, than when she lay down in her deep narrow bed. Her influence will be stronger to-morrow than it is to-day; and so with every succeeding day, as seeds multiply from field to field for the final great harvest. It is strange there are many who never have influence until they have passed out of sight."

"Yes, that is quite true, said Mrs. Gerade." I have noticed it, particularly exemplified by mother and children. A good, loving patient mother often pleads her life away in prayer for her wayward child, with no seeming result. But when her lips become voiceless; when she is no longer able to clasp her hands in supplication; when there is a vacant chair in the home circle, then, it is her influence speaks with a power and eloquence reserved only for those in spirit-land."

"It must be a great blessing to have a good mother," said Winona, drawing a deep sigh. "I have often pictured how happy I would be to have some one who would always love and sympathize with me; to have my interest at heart as she had her own, never forsaking me under any circumstances."

"How old were you when your mother died?" questioned Mrs. Gerade.

"The same breath that prayed her last prayer, breathed the breath of life into me. Surely I ought to be a good woman!" said Winona softly, the tears filling her eyes.

"Did you ever think of how an infidel cemetery would look?" said Mrs. Gerade, in order to attract Winona's attention from the painful thoughts she saw she had aroused.

"Yes, and to me, what a scene of dearth and monotony! Every tomb bears the same inscription —dead! dead! dead! No marble angels point

with uplifted finger there to the resurrection. The mourners sit by the graves with no upward look of hope. Their heads drooped forever with despair."

"What is your creed, Winona?"

"Humanity."

"Do you mean as Christ taught it?"

"Yes. His life was an example of loving one's neighbor as themselves. That one word "*love*"—unbounded, everlasting, covers all the law and commandments."

"Do you find no trouble or doubt in accepting the divinity of Christ and the Bible as revelation?"

"No more than I do in accepting the shining sun, the blooming flower and the rippling stream as revelations of the natural law. Since I have comprehended how natural law is embodied in the spiritual, making religion and science not opposed to each other, my faith has been established. See what a glorious sunset!" Winona broke off abruptly.

"Yes, it makes me think of Christ's words: 'When it is evening ye say it will be fair weather, for the sky is red. And in the morning, it will be foul weather to-day, for the sky is red and lowering. Oh, ye hypocrites; ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?' The signs of this present time indicate to me *moral liberty*. As you suggested, we need people of power to defend *humanity* in man. "The *True Man*" should be their motto. We need a second

Paul, to stand on a Mars' Hill in our midst and with a significant and forcible gesture to us say, 'Ye children of this latter day, I perceive that in all things concerning your salvation, ye are too *sceptical.*"

By this time, they had again reached the public thoroughfare where the rumbling and passing of carts, wagons and vehicles interrupted their thoughtful conversation.

And so the days passed until the summer came, when Mr. and Mrs. Gerade went away. Winona missed them very much, for they took such a fatherly and motherly interest in her. She was making rapid progress in her art; her salary was to be raised in the fall. Since Mr. and Mrs. Gerade were away, Winona saw more of Mrs. Pearce, Miss Mays and Mr. Le Blanc. The dull summer season gave them more leisure. They would frequently go up to Central Park for an afternoon and wander around, looking at the animals or strolling through the museum. Then, sitting down to rest with others, amusing themselves watching the nurses and children; the latter in an atmosphere of crumbs, munching crackers from a paper-bag. The "swells" whom business kept in the city, dashed by in their handsome turnouts, with jingling, glittering harness, flirting with their "summer girls."

"How very plebeian we must appear to these lords of fashion," said Winona, "and what a restful independence we enjoy, being unknown. After all,

there are advantages for the obscure, as well as the famous."

Miss Mays and Winona had stopped to admire a bed of flowers, while Mrs. Pearce and Mr. Le Blanc walked ahead.

"Isn't Mr. Le Blanc peculiar; I don't like eccentricity in people," said Miss Mays, in a casual, pleasant way, as he turned to look back at them, and waved to "come on."

"Why, I don't know," replied Winona; "I rather admire him. He is a brave young man and works so hard. He keeps his door open these warm days, and I see him constantly at his table. He has a refined nature, I think, for he keeps a geranium in his window all the while. Some people would say that was somewhat effeminate or affected in him, but to me it indicates appreciation of the beautiful in a delicate way. That one green plant with a red blossom gives an entirely different expression to his narrow, humble room. It reminds me of a cactus bloom giving beauty to the desert."

Miss Mays smiled with satisfaction to herself. "Mrs. Pearce seems to admire him also," she remarked, in the same careless tone.

"Yes, I'm sure she does. She said only the other day that it was a pity he didn't have the judgment to keep his money as he had the ability to make it, being so generous natured."

Again Miss Mays smiled with satisfaction.

That little chat between Miss Mays and Winona was only one of a series of the same style that had been continuing for some months. When Winona first came into their midst, Mr. Le Blanc, as has been said, was most courteous to her, but always in a way to which she could take no exceptions. Somehow, of late, he was polite, but Winona did not see him so often, nor did he seem to care to chat with her as before. At first Winona gave his indifference no thought; but when it grew by degrees to coolness, she began to wonder at his manner toward her, but said nothing. Should she speak of it to Mrs. Pearce and Miss Mays they might think her unbecomingly interested. Soon Mrs. Pearce became more exclusive, but always speaking pleasantly to Winona. Miss Mays, on the contrary, was more agreeable and sociable than ever. Winona thought it all over many times as she tossed on her bed at night.

There was something going wrong; she felt it intuitively, but what it was she could not understand. She tried again and again to think if she had done anything to offend, but with no satisfactory result. It made her most unhappy. She at last made up her mind to go to Mrs. Pearce and ask her what was the matter—why she was not so friendly as of old. She determined to go to her the first opportunity; she would go then, but Mrs. Pearce was out. "I, too, will take a walk," said Winona; "perhaps by the time I return, she will be in. I can

not content myself in this frame of mind." As she went out Miss Mays passed her on the stairway, coming in with a pleasant greeting. As Winona reached the pavement she noticed a few drops of rain on the stones, and turned back for her umbrella. When she reached her room, she saw through the window that the drops were coming thick and faster. "It is only a passing shower," she said; "I'll wait until it is over."

A moment later Winona heard two voices just outside her door, that stood a bit ajar. She recognized them to be Mrs. Pearce's and Miss Mays'.

"I wouldn't have you think I'm in the habit of talking about people, Mrs. Pearce," Winona heard Miss Mays say, in an injured, apolegetic tone, "and she didn't mean any harm, I dare say; but, of course, you know, I'm engaged to Mr. Le Blanc, and to hear any one speak of his room as if it were a poverty hovel when theirs is no better, it hurts me as it did him; and that you should accuse him of being a spendthrift was more cutting. Did Mrs. Manning know the relationship existing between us, of course, she would not have told me these things; but I do not care to make my engagement public yet. I regret so much that she comes to me and talks this way, for I have always liked her, and, indeed, I shall always treat her kindly. I do not want to have any unpleasantness. I shall insist upon Mr. Le Blanc's being courteous to her, and I hope

you will let it make no difference in your regard for her."

"You are very noble and charitable, Miss Mays, in your behavior towards Mrs. Manning under the circumstances, but I must acknowledge I am sadly disappointed in her. It is hard for me to comprehend such a disposition under such a fair exterior. I, too, shall treat her pleasantly, but shall be reserved—it is not the first time she has misrepresented me to you. I hope you will explain to Mr. Le Blanc."

Winona for some time sat dazed, as if an insulting hand had dashed a glass of cold water in her face, causing her to gasp for breath. She locked her door when they had gone, and with a pitiful, "Oh, God!" on her lips, buried her face in her hands, weeping bitterly.

Mr. and Mrs. Gerade had returned to the city the day before. Winona had been to welcome them, but "she would go again to see Mrs. Gerade early next morning and ask her advice." Winona retired, but did not sleep all night. The next morning she hurried to Mrs. Gerade, finding her lying, as usual, in the library. Winona was glad to find her alone. "Why, good-morning," said Mrs. Gerade, cheerily, "how good of you to come. I was just wishing for you."

Winona's face was flushed with excitement; her eyes flashing, and nostrils distended with feeling. She could not even reply to Mrs. Gerade's good-

morning. She seemed choking, and sank heavily into a chair.

"Why, Winona," said Mrs. Gerade, as she now called her—"pray what is the matter?"

Winona rose suddenly, one hand grasping firmly the back of the chair as if to steady herself. "Mrs. Gerade," she said, with as much dramatic force as the greatest emotional actress could have done it. "I hate my womankind! Yes, *hate* her!!"

Mrs. Gerade raised herself upon her elbow and gazed in astonishment at Winona. "My dear child," she said with anxiety, "what has come over you; how unlike yourself! I have never seen you act like this."

"Oh, I have been *deceived*," Winona went on, "and by a *woman!*"

"Come, sit here at my side, my dear, calm yourself, and now, tell me all about it."

Winona then told Mrs. Gerade how she had put so much confidence in Miss Mays; how Miss Mays had pretended so long to be her friend; told her of the mutual esteem that had existed between herself and Mr. Le Blanc, and the reciprocated love of Mrs. Pearce, which Miss Mays had so shrewdly undermined and shattered. "Oh, why did she do it? for I have never done her one unkindness," Winona added.

"Jealousy," answered Mrs. Gerade.

Winona looked thoughtful a moment, then said: "Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, said:

'Jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.' I believe that it is woman's greatest curse, though it is not generally so regarded. In naming over the great sins, murder, and such like, it is never mentioned, and yet, how many evil things it hugs in its ravenous embrace. The jealous woman oftentimes blasphemes her rival, robs her of a good name, bears false witness against her and murders her again and again in her heart."

"I see you have suffered, Winona."

"Yes, Mrs. Gerade, and I now realize that there are two kinds of jealousy, just as there are two styles of villains. Shakespeare has given us the bold, merciless Richard III., and the crafty, wicked Iago. I have suffered from both."

"I readily recognize," said Mrs. Gerade, "Miss Mays as the Iago type. She is one who should be branded "dangerous;" but, listen, my dear; think for a moment of what you said. You said you "*hated*" your womankind. Do you realize that includes *every*body?"

"Oh, not *you*—not *Jean*, and I would say Mrs. Pearce; for it is not her fault she misjudges me. Forgive me, I should not have spoken so," said Winona, kissing Mrs. Gerade affectionately; "but for the time, it made me so bitter! Miss Mays has robbed me of something that all time can never replace. I can never again be just the same—it will be wanting in me—confidence! Ah, Jean warned

me; she said I might yet need my faith in her to save me from infidelity in friendship."

"You must not brood over these experiences, Winona, for they will contaminate your own lovely nature. I grant you, that jealousy is woman's greatest curse. I have often wondered that the ministers did not hold it up before us as a greater abhorrence than they do. There are many of our sex who cannot even see a new feather in their neighbor's bonnet without having their envy aroused. An entire outfit of a fresh spring hat would be sufficient to make them miserable. These so-called petty vices, are productive of monstrous, evils just as massive oaks grow from an acorn. I am surprised, Winona, that you have lived to be a married woman, a widow, and are just learning this disagreeable lesson. With your attractiveness and accomplishments, I wonder you have not learned it long ago. You will have to review it many times over, I fear, in your life, and by repetition you must not hope for it to become easy; it will always present new phases, just as the same moon rises before us every month, but bringing with it different seasons. But with your dignity and womanliness, and by being true to yourself, you can always master it. Keep your conscience clear, then you will be happy and a power for good wherever you go."

"Oh, Mrs. Gerade, I am so grateful to you for talking to me like this," said Winona. "I do not

want to be cynical; I want to love everybody. I forgot myself when I said, I hated; that is such a terrible word, but I had such a dreadful pent-up feeling when I thought of the injustice, I did not know how else to give vent to it. And now, what shall I do about Miss Mays? I do not want to have a vulgar scene—how shall I vindicate myself? It is true I said Mr. Le Blanc's narrow, humble room was made attractive by his red geranium, and that Mrs. Pearce thought his extreme generosity of nature a pity, but should I so present these statements, my amend would likely not be accepted. Even should it be, then, general dislikes would follow. I certainly do not want to mar their happiness. Advise me."

"My dear, have not one unpleasant word with either of those people, though they have condemned you without even giving you a trial. As a weapon of defence, silence may not have so sharp a blade, but it has often a jewelled haft of great value. Mark you, Miss Mays will yet hang herself by her own rope, without your tying the noose. Mr. Le Blanc will yet be your friend, and Mrs. Pearce love you better than ever. Treat them politely; kindly; but I do not want you to remain in their midst another day. Mr. Gerade and I have talked for sometime of having you to come and live with us. We have no children; we love you, Winona; we want you to come and be as our own. We do not ask you to give up your art. With your

pride and disposition, you would not be content idle. Come and let us endeavor to be a joy to each other."

Winona threw her arms about Mrs. Gerade's neck and kissed her again and again. "There are dark clouds in my life," she said, "but I see now, their silver lining!"

CHAPTER XI.

TWO years had elapsed since Winona came to live with the Gerades. Theirs was a happy family, and they did indeed treat her as their own. Teresa, too, loved her devotedly, and anticipated her every want. Teresa had come to be a great sufferer from the rapid growth of a tumor, that threatened her life. The doctors said she would have to submit to an operation, which would give her one chance to live, where without, it would be impossible.

"For your sakes, and not my own," she said, looking lovingly into Winona's and Mrs. Gerade's face, "do I care to live. I will go under the knife."

Teresa had lived with Mrs. Gerade for years. She came to her from the Employment Bureau, and all Mrs. Gerade knew was, that Teresa was an orphan, reared in one of the homes of the city. She soon became invaluable to her as a maid, and since her ill health had assumed almost entire management of the housekeeping. She had found her always the same good-natured, intelligent and refined woman, never presuming in her position. Winona

had for her a peculiar affection. She thought sometimes, perhaps it was because she, too, was an orphan. She found it difficult to treat her as a domestic; somehow she felt that she was her equal.

Mrs. Gerade procured a private room for Teresa at St. Luke's Hospital, and requested she should have the best attention. The operation seemed most successful, and the doctors gave every encouragement for her recovery. Mrs. Gerade was not able to go and see her often, but daily, Winona would spend several hours reading and chatting cheerfully with her. Teresa always looked for her coming with impatience; her face lighting with a smile at her appearance. Some days passed, but Teresa didn't feel so well. The doctor looked serious and said: "the wound had healed too rapidly; there was danger of blood poisoning; it must be lacerated again." Poor Teresa bore the intense agony bravely, while Winona held her hand.

"It is all for you," she said, the pain swelling the veins of her face, as she looked into Winona's eyes, with a pitiful, loving expression. Winona didn't comprehend; she thought they were only words full of suffering expressed as a groan would be.

From that time Teresa began to fail. It was Christmas-eve day. As the doctor entered on his usual round, Teresa said to him very calmly and earnestly: "Doctor, I want you to tell me honestly, am I going to die? Do not hesitate, I am

not afraid, and there are none to keep me here, save that angel one, who comes to be with me every day."

The doctor remained silent a moment. "It won't be long," he said softly, at last.

"Well, doctor, I want to tell you, that when I came here, I was registered under the assumed name of Teresa Steihn, by which I have been known since living in New York. My real name is Teresa Hardeman. I want to beg of you to make that correction for the sake of my burial certificate. I do not want to die leaving a lie on my record."

The doctor looked at Teresa a bit curiously, making no reply, but ringing for writing material and taking her corrections, as she dictated. It was not an unusual occurrence to him; nothing very romantic about it; there were so many strange people with hidden lives who died in hospitals.

Winona came as usual to spend the afternoon with her, bringing a white Christmas lily. Teresa took the flower with feeble fingers, regarding it, then Winona, with a thoughtful look, as if one reminded her of the other. The afternoon passed so rapidly to Teresa—she had but little to say, when there was so much on her heart she wanted to say, but could not find the courage. Winona rose to go.

"Oh, I wish you didn't have to leave me." Here Teresa hesitated, looking pleadingly at Winona, then said: "Would you mind very much spending the night with me, my dear? The doctor says it

won't be long and I want your face to be the last I look into; you can make my going peaceful."

"Why, certainly, Teresa, I will stay with you; it is a great pleasure for me to do anything for your comfort," answered Winona, with effort, trying to choke back her tears.

The early part of the evening Teresa fell asleep, resting better than she had for some time. It was midnight. Winona sat by the window, and looking across the street, caught through a half open shutter a glimpse of a curly head, pillowed on its downy bed. A happy mother and father crept on tiptoe about the room, filling their darling's stocking with "Santa-Claus." "Happy, innocent one:" thought Winona. "How the scene takes me back to childhood; to grandpa and grandma, Aunt Sallie and poor Brother Dan. Ah, how strange is life! This loving and parting!" Here the tears began coursing her cheeks. The night was clear and cold—a glorious night. Everywhere was a hushed stillness, even the many sufferers on the long rows of cots in the ward near by, seemed not to groan and call aloud to the Lord as usual. Was it that all nature was reverencing the anniversary of the birth of Jesus? Suddenly Teresa woke with a start. Winona went and sat by her side, taking her hand in hers. Teresa looked into her face with a smile, and closing her eyes again, as if loath to wake, said: "I was dreaming I was with him." Winona made no reply but stroked her brow tenderly, wondering who she

meant when speaking of "him." Teresa kept her eyes closed for a moment, then, opening them, looked straight into Winona's face, saying: "Miss Winona, with my last breath, I want to tell you a great secret." The stillness, the dim light of the sick room, Teresa's pale face, and that word, "Secret," made the chills creep over Winona. "A long time ago," Teresa began slowly in a weak voice, "when I first could remember accurately, I lived away down in one of the filthy dens of this great city. An old, toothless, wrinkled hag, who taught me to call her mother, and a younger, but not more prepossessing man, whom I called father, brought me up to the age of seven years, in a miserable, cruel way. Suddenly, one day, I found myself left by them at an orphan's home, wearing a clean, white apron that was my joy, having known nothing but filthy rags. I have never seen the woman who called herself my mother since, but the man came back one day, after five years, and took me away with him. I struggled and cried to stay, but with no avail. He went with me to the far west, stopping here and there, and treating me cruelly all the while on account of my pleadings to go back. We lived in that way several years; then settled in a hut on the prairie, near an Indian camp. They frightened me almost crazy with their wild whoops and savage war-dances. Hurriedly, in the middle of one night, we left; he seemed to be frightened about something. On and on we trav-

eled, until once more we stopped in the south." Here Teresa stopped to rest a moment, while Winona held her breath in wonderment. "We lived," Teresa commenced again, "in a log cabin, back in the piney woods near Decatur, Georgia. The man who called himself my father, was known in that settlement as "old Rag Jake."

Winona uttered a stifled scream and fell on her knees at Teresa's side.

"Compose yourself, Miss Winona," said Teresa, "for my breath is growing weaker and I want you to know; it may yet be of value to you. Dan Hardeman, a grand young man, who was overseeing the darkies in a field near by, came to our cabin for water one day. Old Jake was away, and we commenced talking together. After that Dan would watch his chance when I was alone, and came often. We soon were in love with each other; yes, we truly loved. But what was to be done about it? The Hardemans were people of station, and I, seemingly, of low degree. But my nature tells me, I was not lowly born. I know Dan felt so too; for I told him my story as I am telling it to you. I have heard old Jake, in his drunken mutterings, talk of his home across the ocean—of the "Highborn's money," and swearing to yet have some of it. Then, again, he would wake with a delirious start, and say 'they were on his track!'— I feel sure, Miss Winona, I'm a stolen child. I believe that somewhere in this world, a noble born father and

mother's heart beats with yearning for me, if they are not already stilled by grief on my account. Sometimes I can close my eyes and an indistinct picture comes before me of trees, a great building with bright lights and gaily dressed people, and soldiers that stand in the yard. I must have lived near a castle, surrounded, perhaps, by lindens, and saw the gendarmes guarding it. Then I never hear a mother singing her child to sleep without having a strange forgotten feeling creep over me. My mother's voice must have been very sweet and soothing. Whenever I would attempt to question Old Jake or doubt his word in regard to my identity, he would beat me unmercifully. I was driven to desperation, yet felt a public union between Dan and I would never do. I loved him too well to have him openly humiliated by my position. I could not prove to the world I was not Old Jake's child. Dan said, 'we will marry secretly. I will buy up Old Jake; pay him well to keep our secret, while we will go far away, and start life anew together.' I consented to his proposition, happy in the thought of love and freedom, and at the same time, sparing Dan's good name. Old Jake readily consented—I suppose having despaired of ever reaping any benefits from having stolen me for money—his scheme failed in some way. Dan and I were married soon after, binding the minister who performed the ceremony, to secrecy also. He died in a short while, and I am sure what he knew was

buried with him. The only witness to our marriage was Mr. Billy Simpkins, your old family friend. Dan said he knew he was true and would never betray us. That night just before we were married, Dan drew up the papers with the contract which Old Jake signed. It stated when we were married; the sum Dan was to pay Old Jake to keep the secret. That should he ever tell it, he would forfeit that money at the penalty of the law. In case of Dan's death, his property was to come to me. When I died it was to go to my children, should any be born. If not, then it was to be yours. It also stated, should Dan and I die, leaving children, that through no other medium, save that of the swearing tongue of one of them in person, at the Court Room, to their identity as our child, and answering sufficient questions to prove that assertion true, should the property be theirs. You see, Miss Winona—"

"Call me Winona, Teresa," interrupted Winona, "for you are my sister, you know," then kissed her affectionately.

Teresa smiled as if happy even in her pain, then went on: "Well, we didn't know what old Jake might attempt in after years, knowing him to be so unscrupulous, and pretending to be my father. We took every precaution. There were two contracts exactly alike, written out—one for old Jake and one for Dan. We had expected to leave Georgia in two or three weeks after our marriage, but unexpected business of importance arose and

detained Dan some days longer. Just as our arrangements were completed, and we were on the eve of starting, a summons came to Dan to go to the war. He had to go. I told him, my heart breaking with grief, that I would remain with old Jake until he came back, praying every hour for his safety. The night we parted, I shall never forget. Old Jake had gone to Decatur. We had our last moments together with the moon alone as a witness. The night was balmy and still. Nothing was to be heard save the frogs in the marsh, whose croaking came to us, mellowed by distance. I sat by Dan's side and forgot my wretched past, hoping and praying for the future. For hours we sat. As he started to go, I walked with him to the edge of the field. We stood there for a moment in silence, the moon drawing our shadows, lank and tall, athwart the wild grass. I could tell from Dan's deep, heavy breathing, he was trying to control his feelings for my sake. Suddenly he threw his arms about me and hugged me close ; so close I could feel his wild heart throbs, beating against my breast ; his hot breath streaming on my cheek. For a long time he held me ; neither of us could speak—then with a desperate, heartfelt groan, he turned and ran into the shadows of the thick pines, leaving me standing alone—alone!"

Teresa's eyes shone with a long-forgotten brightness, and her voice recovered in a measure its strength, as she told the story of her love. Winona

still knelt at her side, weeping quietly. After a swallow of water, Teresa continued: "When Mr. Simpkins came home from the war, he told me of Dan's being wounded at Gettysburg. I was almost frantic. I thought and devised many plans to go to him, but I did not know just where he was. One day, just before the battle of Peachtree Creek about your Aunt Sallie's house, Mr. Simpkins brought me a letter from Dan, telling me where he was. He had been too ill to write before. I determined to go to him the first opportunity. It was the day after the battle that I met black Sam out picking up corn the army had dropped. He fell to talking with me, and asked my opinion about going with the Yankees. A thought struck me. I would tell him to go, and I would pay him to let me escape with him. It was my only way; I thought he would be an assistance to me, as I knew nothing of the South or how or where to go to get North. I knew the Yankees would direct him. He consented, and we that day started off for the North. The unpleasant vicissitudes of that journey I could not begin to tell you. At Chattanooga I left black Sam; he fell in with crowds of other darkies, who were there also on their way North. I never saw him again. Perhaps, he was one of the many who died there at that time. When I reached the hospital, where Dan had been, they told me he had just gone on the field again. There were but two things then for me to do, go back to old Jake or start out for myself in the world.

I did not so much as debate the matter of going back, but came here, the place I first remember; went to the Employment Bureau and through that, got my position with Mrs. Gerade, with whom I have since lived. God bless her for her goodness to me! I wrote to Mr. Simpkins, and told him, if a letter should come from Dan to me (we always corresponded through him) to forward it to a fictitious name, which I gave him—Post Office here. I did not want any one to know where I was; I determined if Dan were killed, I would never ask for his property. I knew if I had it, old Jake would make my life a torture again, should he find it out, and I knew he would keep a close watch for me when he heard of Dan's death. Through Mr. Simpkins, when the war was over, I learned of Dan's death. Poor fellow! Trying to get to me and you, he lost his life! But I don't grieve for him to-night as of old, Winona, for he is so near me, waiting to take my hand as I reach the other shore—don't cry, my sweet one, you that have always been so considerate and good to me. I have loved you since the first day you came to talk with Mr. Gerade about a position. I saw the resemblance of Dan in your face, and after, heard you tell Mrs. Gerade, you were a Hardeman, before you married—heard you speak of Aunt Sallie and all; then, I knew you were Dan's "little sister," as he always called you. Don't worry, try and believe as I do the doctrine of the German Theologian—'the least important thing

does not happen except as God wills.' And now that I have told you my story, Winona, I want you to promise me, that you will never tell what I have said to you, to any living or who may yet live, save your Aunt Sallie, Mr. Simpkins, and your brother George, of whom Dan so often spoke. To tell it would do no good; it could only feed hungry gossipers, and I would guard the Hardeman's good name in death, as I have tried to do it in life. I do not know what disposition has been made of Dan's property—perhaps they have thought me dead already; anyway, now it is yours; I have no children to claim it."

"It all remains just as dear brother Dan left it, Teresa," said Winona. "Soon after you left, Aunt Sallie told me, old Jake went too. I had such a horror of him as a child. I did not know Brother Dan's life until just before I left Georgia to go and live in Tennessee. Suddenly one day, old Jake appeared, after having been absent all those years, hunting for you, no doubt. He boldly walked into the room, where sat Aunt Sallie, grandma and myself, and said you had been living with him for years; that you had then just died, leaving a child which had been born to you after you went to nurse Dan at the hospital. That when brother Dan went on the field again, you decided to remain north until the war was over, when Brother Dan would return to you there; that he wrote you from the field, he was going home to see me, Aunt Sallie

and all, as he was not a great way off. That you never heard from him again until he, old Jake, went to you and told you of Brother Dan's burial in the Hardeman graveyard. He then said,—I remember now how like a hideous imp he looked—'Teresa did not demand Dan's property immediately, having heard how impoverished was the South after the war. She wanted you all to think her dead, and use what was left of it, as I was giving her and the child a comfortable living. But just before she died, I lost all I had. It was then she said to me; 'go to Georgia; get what is Dan's to educate and take care of my boy. I leave him to you.'

"Then Aunt Sallie got out Brother Dan's contract —the one you told me of—that he had left with a letter, containing full directions in case of his death, which he hid in an old trunk in the dungeon. When he was killed, Brother Dan gave the key of that trunk to our neighbor, the Major, telling him to give it to Aunt Sallie, and telling him where she would find his valuable papers. Aunt Sallie read old Jake the part of the contract that said; 'the child must appear in person and swear to its identity before the property could be delivered to it.' Old Jake winced at that, and said the boy was too sick to travel, being afflicted with white swelling, and was in sore need of money. Then, Aunt Sallie told him if he would let her know where the child was, she would see that some one went to him and relieved his wants. Old Jake appeared insulted, that she should hes-

itate to trust him in the matter, and left the house in a rage. I shall never forget how cruelly he kicked my poor dog Turk, as he went out. He disappeared as suddenly as he came, and we have never heard from him since."

"You see the depth of his villainous scheme, how he had perjured his soul for the greed of gain!" said Teresa.

"Aunt Sallie had never told me of Brother Dan's life before that day," Winona went on; "she wanted to keep the shadow out of my life as long as possible. Only our immediate family know of it."

"I pray God that old Jake may never again return into your life," said Teresa. "I feel that my new song, even in the other world, would have a strain of sadness in it, could I look down on you here below, and see you suffering on my account."

"Do not worry about that, dear Teresa; God is an upright judge,—as you said, let us leave it all to Him. And now, you must rest awhile from talking; I see you have tired yourself."

"Only one thing more said Teresa; "my burial certificate will be made out with the truth in it. I've so directed it. I did not like the thought of dying with a lie written in black and white by my direction. Mr. Gerade is away; Mrs. Gerade not able to come to me; I want you to take charge of my body, then, no one will know. The doctor will not give what I told him another thought; he is so accustomed to such things in his position."

Winona's tender, sympathetic kiss on Teresa's lips, was her only reply, and seemed a peaceful benediction to the poor sufferer, for she closed her eyes and was soon sweetly sleeping again. Winona took up her silent, lonely watch at Teresa's side once more. The hours passed. Suddenly a mellow light shown through the stained glass windows of a church near by. Winona could see them from where she sat. There was something so holy in their lighted faces, being, "In Memoriam," of the dead. Presently the chorister boys went marching into the church, in their long robes and white surplices, looking like phantoms in the dim gray of the early morning. The snow began falling gently upon the church-goers, hurrying along to early service. A moment later the chimes of the church steeple rang out the proclamation: "Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for to-day was born in the City of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord! Hosannah! Hosannah!" "I wonder if the chimes will waken Teresa," thought Winona, looking closely into her face. She could not hear her breathe; she bent down and listened—the heart was stilled—forever! As peacefully as the sunbeam glides into the moonbeam at twilight, Teresa had passed from earth to the better land—gone to join in the Hallelujah Anthems being chanted that Christmas morning to the Saviour King.

CHAPTER XII.

WINONA was now thoroughly identified with New York's best society. Her position was an enviable one. She was regarded as a connoisseur of art, giving valuable productions from her pen and pencil to the same. Charitable institutions felt the power of her leading spirit, and people of culture and refinement in all professions recognized in her a sympathetic congeniality, while admirers of personal beauty placed her among the loveliest. Several years having passed since her sorrow, she had put aside the sombre black of mourning, and donned more cheerful, becoming colors. Mr. and Mrs. Gerade's kindness and tender care had done much to smooth and chase away the care lines in her face She was even more beautiful than before. The crisp northern climate had brought a color to her pale cheeks. She was a magnetic queen wherever she went; always treating her subjects in such a pleasant way; never once seeming to feel her superiority.

It was during the opera season. Patti was to sing in "Lakme" that night, and Mr. and Mrs. Gerade had invited General and Mrs. Sherman as their

guests to hear her. Winona knew it would be a brilliant occasion, and stood before her mirror, donning her richest, and most becoming costume. Mr. and Mrs. Gerade had already gone; the carriage would return for her. Scarcely had the noise of the rolling wheels bearing them, rumbled away in the distance, when a telegram came for Mr. Gerade.

"Some matter of business, I suppose," said Winona; "I'll take it to him when I go." She had just finished giving the finishing touch to her toilet. The mirror into which she looked reflected a picture of loveliness—a symphony in pale blue—when the door bell sounded out again. A moment later she heard a man's voice in the hall-way, questioning the porter. Winona listened intently a moment, then her cheeks suddenly turned pale, then crimson in quick succession. "What is there in that voice that makes my heart beat like this?" she said to herself, tipping to the stair-railing and peeping over. But she could not see; whoever it was had gone into the drawing-room. The porter came up and said: "the telegram received a little while before was from Mr. and Mrs. Gerade's nephew, announcing his coming. That it must have been delayed, and he was in the drawing-room now."

Winona heard the carriage returning for her. "I'm going down now, anyway," she said "and will go in and greet him, since Mrs. Gerade isn't here." She threw her rich plush cloak carelessly about her shoulders and tripped down the stairs, wondering as

she went, what kind of a man he was. She had often heard Mr. and Mrs. Gerade speak of their nephews in general, but nothing particular; she didn't even remember having heard any of their names. With cat-like step her daintily slippered feet fell upon the soft carpeting. The gentle noise of her gown might have been mistaken for the rustle of the silken curtains. She stood in the drawing-room door-way, looking into the face of a man, but unobserved as yet, by him. She stopped suddenly and held her breath. Sitting just under the light of a beautiful standing lamp, his strong, noble features were lighted boldly. The premature iron-gray hair about his temples gave him a *distingué* appearance. On his clean, shaven face, was a thoughtful serious expression. The *tout ensemble* would have made an admirable subject for a painting called: "The Head of a Philosopher." He seem to be regarding intently, a decided spot upon the carpet. "Lawrence De Movil!" whispered Winona, taking an impulsive step towards him, causing her opera cloak to slip upon the floor, leaving her alabaster-like neck and arms exposed.

Lawrence De Movil raised his eyes at that moment, and stared motionless, at Winona. He grew weak as if his senses were going. "Could it be," he said to himself, "that his memory had so long and vididly photographed her on his brain, that she now had become to him an apparition?" He could not believe his own eyes until Winona, making an effort:

to control herself, extended her hand, saying. "Why, how do you do, Mr. De Movil? This is a very unexpected and great pleasure. The porter only said, Mr. and Mrs. Gerade's nephew had come. I did not know that you were related to them, or even knew them. I've often heard them speak of their nephews, but only in a general way." Lawrence rose and took her hand as she extended it; holding it firmly while she talked, looking steadily into her face.

"Mrs. Manning still," he questioned.

"Yes," replied Winona, her cheeks coloring.

Their hands seemed bound together by a strange force, stronger than powerful chains. There seemed no inclination on the part of either to release them.

"It is too sudden!" at last Lawrence said, in a measured, deep voice, full of feeling. "I can scarcely believe that my hope of years is at last realized."

"I fear I'm keeping you standing; won't you be seated?" Winona interrupted with her usual tact.

"Your same old self," Lawrence remarked with a smile. "I happened," he added, "to meet a gentleman from Nashville, Tennessee, out west, a few weeks since. He told me all about you; that he heard you had gone north, but he did not know just where. I determined to come back and find you. You were the cause of my going west: I was so restless after meeting you. My life there has been a great financial success, but I feel an utter

failure in many other ways, being without the one woman I have ever loved. But how came you here —it is all so strange!"

Winona's face lost its color, as the past was brought so vividly before her. "It is a long story; I'll tell you all about it sometime," she answered, with a tone of sadness. "I shall have to ask you to excuse me now, as Mrs. Gerade will be wondering at my not coming; she and Mr. Gerade are entertaining General and Mrs. Sherman at the opera this evening. Won't you join us there?"

"Thank you; but my journey has been quite fatiguing, unfitting me for general conversation. However, if you will permit me the pleasure, I will drop in about the close of the evening and accompany you home."

Winona accepted his courtesy, and hurried away, reaching the opera just at the close of the first act. Mr. and Mrs. Gerade thought they had never seen Winona—their protégée--look so beautiful as when she entered the box that evening; her eyes sparkling and face lighted with a radiant, happy expression. They introduced her with great pride to General and Mrs. Sherman. Winona's entrance created quite a little stir among the occupants of other boxes, as she took her seat by the side of General Sherman. There was a decided uplifting of opera glasses and lorgnettes. Many knew she was a Southerner. Winona had a peculiar sensation to creep over her. She had not forgotten what she

and her people had suffered, nor did she forget she was a lady; she never did, always preserving the proverbial reputation of Southern women for sweetness of disposition, modesty, and dignity of manner.

"It is indeed, a brilliant occasion," remarked Winona, taking in the panorama of faces, elegant toilettes, glittering jewels, and gorgeous flowers about her.

"Yes;" replied the general, "it affords a good opportunity for a display of the beautiful; but I have been amused, as well as interested, at some of the people here this evening. They evidently came alone for show. They kept up a steady conversation all during the music, and I dare say, couldn't tell the name of the opera being sung, were they asked, much more to be able to give an intelligent conception of it. They applaud vociferously, just because some one else does."

"That is quite true," answered Winona, "I've often noticed it. The genuine appreciation comes mostly from the galleries, where the people pay one dollar and a half for their seats and work hard for the money. I don't understand how any one with a soul can fail to have it stirred by a grand opera when well sung. I make no distinction as to composers, though I'm somewhat partial to the Italian. Their productions contain such pleasing melodies, lighter, but to me, sweeter than the grand, heavy orchestration of the German. Yet I see in both intrinsic value."

Here the curtain rose and their attention was directed to the stage. At the close of the second act, Winona slipped Lawrence De Movil's telegram into Mr. Gerade's hand. "He came just after you left," she said; "he is at home now. We are old friends, and our meeting was quite a surprise to both. He will drop in later and see me home."

"Ah, a pleasant surprise all around," added Mrs. Gerade; "I'm glad you know him, Winona; he is a grand man."

"Your accent reminds me of the South," abruptly remarked General Sherman, turning again to Winona.

"You have guessed correctly, general; I'm proud to own that as my birthland."

"From what part," he replied with a bit of interest, a scrutinizing expression in his eyes.

"I'm what they call, a "Georgia Cracker," she said, smiling; "from Atlanta, Georgia, though part of my early childhood was passed near Decatur, Georgia, at the place where was fought the battle of Peachtree Creek."

"I remember it," said General Sherman, after a moment's thought, still regarding Winona with interest. "I had my headquarters there."

"Yes; I was but a little child, but I remember it too," Winona went on with an agreeable manner. "It was my aunt's house, and I was living with her at the time." Then came a short, awkward pause. It was Winona who relieved the embarrassment by

saying: "This silver bangle attached to my bracelet is the gift of General McPherson; we all respect his memory; he must have been a noble man. I remember he took me on his knee and kissed me; then I sang for him and he gave me this silver quarter, which I have kept so carefully."

"I hear the South has made great progress of late," causally remarked the general.

"Yes, we are in the beginning of a new era. With the phœnix power to rise, our brave people have a grand future before them."

"How do you like the north and its people," questioned the general.

"I like the crisp, cold atmosphere of its climate," replied Winona; "it brings such a glow to one's cheek and makes them so energetic; yet a breath of our balmy south-winds would be a most agreeable change some of these bleak days. Individually, I find the northern people very charming. I would be very ungrateful did I not love many of them, they having given me such a cordial reception; but, collectively, I do not think them as warm-natured and hospitable as the southerners. Your manners here, are more conservative and conventional than ours. Then, our men, as a class, are more chivalrous to woman than yours. You are surely a progressive and thrifty people. In short, my answer to your question is reduced to this: 'not that I love Cæsar less, but Rome more.'"

Just here the orchestra broke forth, ending their

conversation. Patti was singing in a glorious voice, her famous "Bell Song." The staccato notes fell as clear and round upon the ear, as raindrops in a lily-cup. It was not altogether the song to which Winona listened with delight that made her heart beat faster—she knew Lawrence De Movil was near her without looking back to see; she felt his presence just as she did that night in Tennessee, when the darkies were singing. At the close of the opera, Winona stood bundled in her wraps, huddled in a corner of the door-way to screen herself from the keen winds, while waiting for the number of their carriage to be called. Lawrence stood close to her, but neither spoke.

Mr. and Mrs. Gerade, with General and Mrs. Sherman had driven ahead.

"Mrs. Manning is a charming woman," said General Sherman to Mrs. Gerade, as they drove home. "Beautiful, intelligent, and loyal to her people and convictions in a very womanly way. I had rather expected her to hint, delicately, that there was a fire in the next world about as hot as the one I kindled in Atlanta," he added, with a little laugh.

"Oh, no; replied Mrs. Gerade; that isn't Winona's style. She has lived with me for over two years now, and has never once suggested the subject of politics or sectional differences. If her opinion is asked, she gives it honestly, loyally, but never in a disagreeable way; or, on the contrary,

in a patronizing manner. She loves and admires people for what they really are, from a moral and intellectual standpoint, not from a political. There is nothing narrow in her mind or heart."

When Winona and Lawrence reached home, they found Mr. and Mrs. Gerade waiting to give them a good-night. The older ones soon retired, leaving Winona and Lawrence alone.

"I guess I had better go now, too," said Winona, without making any movement in that direction, but still opening and shutting her fan in a toying way.

"Won't you play, just once for me before you go?" asked Lawrence, quietly. "I remember so well how you played and sang at W——. I could never forget it."

Winona went to the piano. As she played, the tears came into Lawrence De Movil's eyes. No one had ever taught her to play with such feeling. There were moments when she seemed far above the world. She did not play by note; she could give no reason for the "*ff*" the "rall or the *pp*;" her soul ordered it so, and caused the great heart of the piano to sound out in sympathy with her own. Lawrence came and stood beside her.

"I really must go now," she said, rising—"I'm afraid you're tired; you were so quiet as we came home."

"I could not talk, for, I was looking at you by the light of every street lamp we passed. I wanted

to wait until we were quietly alone, Winona. Don't reproach me with such a look for calling you "Winona." I can't be formal with you. We are not strangers to each other. No, from all time close souls we were, and recognized the relationship the first time we ever met, though you were strong and self-respectful and tried to crush the feeling. I saw your effort and loved you the more for your strength and purity. It is not necessary that we should have days of acquaintance and weeks of association to know one another; tell me, sweetheart, is it?" said Lawrence in a low, tender voice, while slipping his arm around Winona's slender waist, and drawing her closer to him. Her whole being responded to his embrace. "Tell me!" he whispered again, his lips touching her cheek, "tell me, Winona, for I love you with all the strength of my manhood! I cannot live without you!—God Himself, I believe, has directed this meeting."

As naturally as the ivy entwines its tendrils around the strong oak, Winona put her arms about Lawrence De Movil's neck. She knew in her heart, that he was the one man she had ever truly loved. She spoke not a word, but her answer was given in her touch, so full of earnest feeling, causing Lawrence De Movil to tremble with emotion.

The standing lamp seemed to burn a double flame of brightness over them in their joy. The pictures on the walls seemed to look down on them

with a blessing while even the sombre bronze statue in a corner appeared to smile approvingly upon them.

"Do you believe in second marriages?" questioned Winona of Mrs. Gerade the next morning, when they were alone.

"Why, certainly," answered Mrs. Gerade, looking at Winona with a touch of suspicion. Mr. Gerade and Lawrence had a cigar together just after breakfast, and she had overheard part of their conversation. "You see, Winona, there are many people whose circle of acquaintance is very limited; their environment itself is narrow. If they marry at all, it must be in that narrow circle, for of course, people must meet to marry. They often select under such circumstances, not the one who is thoroughly congenial or the one whom they feel in all the world is necessary to their happiness—there is a bit of doubt in their minds; but the best that is procurable out of their limited circle. Take yourself, for example: When you married you were young, both in age and experience. Your circle of aquaintance was very limited and your judgment not so clear as now. Should you marry again, your union will be on a more substantial, satisfactory basis."

Winona's ideas agreed thoroughly with those of Mrs. Gerade, though she made only a casual reply, glad at the thought of the harmony between them. Mr. and Mrs. Gerade were greatly delighted as well as surprised, at the sudden aspect affairs had

taken in their household. They loved Winona already, but the thought of her becoming related to them, made them doubly happy. Then, Lawrence was their favorite nephew. The engagement between Lawrence and Winona was immediately announced, and their wedding planned for an early day--just after Easter, when they would go abroad for the summer. Jean was to be one of the bridesmaids, and Mr. Le Blanc one of the groomsmen at the wedding. Mr. Le Blanc had made rapid progress in his profession and was fast becoming well known and highly respected. No one took more interest in assisting Winona with her trousseau than did Mrs. Pearce. Miss Mays would not participate in any way, for her engagement to Mr. Le Blanc had been broken, and she had hidden herself away in humiliation in another part of the city, just where, none of them knew.

It was two weeks before Winona's wedding day. She was busy with preparations and thoroughly happy in her love, when a little brass-buttoned messenger handed her a telegram. Winona smiled as she tore it open, supposing it to be from Lawrence, saying what hour he would be down that evening, as he had been visiting friends at West Point for a few days. As she read the message with eager eyes, her hands trembled, and she turned deadly pale. It said: "Old Jake has appeared with a child; you are needed; let nothing detain you: come immediately. Aunt Sallie."

Thrusting the telegram into the fire, she hastened to Mrs. Gerade saying: "My dear, my aunt has telegraphed for me to come immediately, and to let nothing detain me. I shall go by this afternoon's train, for some of them may be desperately ill. My going must be of much importance, or she would not have telegraphed. I'll write and explain to Lawrence."

"But some one must go with you; I do not like to have you travel so far alone when under such anxiety," said Mrs. Gerade.

"Oh, no, thank you," replied Winona, "I really don't mind; I beg of you to let me go alone. I do not want to trouble any one, and I promise to come back soon."

That afternoon found Winona southward bound. As the train rushed along, she thought many times of "the chase of the trees." She became very downcast in spirit. "What will the issue of it all be? Is it that happiness is once more to turn away from me with a mocking laugh? Have I been wrong to hope for so much? Is it that God intends we shall dream in our slumbers of beauty, happiness, and then waken us to the realization that life is duty, usefulness? Can there be no combination of the two?" These were some of her thoughts, as she sat looking out of the car window at the passing landscape.

She found Aunt Sallie in a distressed condition over the existing affairs, fearing there would yet be

great scandal and gossip over Dan's dead body bringing a blot on that family name, whose honor had stood the test of years.

"Let us try and make a compromise in some way with old Jake," said George Hardeman, who had also come to assist in the matter.

"No," said Winona; "I do not think it best. He might appear again at any time to renew the trouble. It must be settled now and forever. I've told you Teresa's story, and I believe we can manage without publicity. The Judge who is on the bench this week is an old true friend of grandpa's. I think it will be alone necessary to take him into our confidence. I feel sure he will not betray it. Suppose we arrange with him to have old Jake, and the young man he claims is Teresa's child, to meet with us in the Court Room at Decatur, just after tomorrow morning's session. We will have him ask old Jake's statement informally, then I shall give mine. I believe that will end the matter without a public prosecution. If Mr. Simpkins were only alive his testimony of having written to Teresa would be most valuable, but, as it is, we can only defend ourselves by Teresa's statement."

Accordingly, the next day, the Judge, Winona sitting at his side on the stand, with the little group Aunt Sallie, George Hardeman, old Jake and a young man with a peculiar vacant expression and thin tight lips, before him, proceeded to investigate the claims put forth by old Jake.

"I would like you, Mrs. Manning," said the judge, "to question this man if you please, while I listen."

Winona rose upon the stand like a very Portia in her dignity. "You say," she commenced slowly, "that you have been living for years with your daughter Teresa Hardeman?"

"Yes," answered old Jake.

"Will you swear that this young man here is her child?"

"Yes."

"That she left directions, with her dying breath, for you to claim Dan Hardeman's property for him?"

"Yes."

"Well, I have testimony to the contrary," Winona went on in the same calm way. "I have lived with Teresa Hardeman also. She told her story to me of how she lived in the slums of New York City when you first brought her to this country; of how you traveled here and there with her, settling at last near this town. She believed she was a stolen child, nor recognized you as her father. She told me of her marriage with my brother Dan Hardeman; of how she escaped you during the war: that she never saw Brother Dan after their first parting, but went and made for herself a place in the world, unaided by any one. She did not even know what had become of you. She is now dead but left no children."

Old Jake's mummy-like face wore a strange expression as Winona spoke. He stood motionless for a moment after she had finished, then said snarlingly: "I shall hold to what I've said and demand the property. It will be my word and this young man's against yours." Winona felt her heart sink. 'Could there be a loop hole through which the alleged son could plead his own cause, independent of old Jake's assistance, but at his instructions? If that were so, then even though she did prove in the end old Jake a liar, in regard to Teresa, she would have no proof, save that of Teresa's dead word, which was weak against the shrewd living, that the young man was not really her son.' These thoughts rushed in quick succession through her brain. She felt the importance of the moment.

"Let the young man give his statement," said Winona, showing no confusion. Old Jake gave him a quick motion, at which he rose and began spelling rapidly on his fingers.

"Stop!" said Winona, suddenly, her face brightening. Old Jake gave him another signal, causing him to cease. "I do not understand that language."

"Then, I will interpret it for you," replied old Jake. "He is deaf and dumb, and as my word seems not to be worth anything with you, perhaps, he had better write his testimony."

"It would be of no value given in either way," said Winona, decidedly, "for this contract distinctly says: "should Dan Hardeman and his wife die,

leaving children, *through no other medium* save that of the *swearing tongue* of one of them in person, at the Court Room, to their identity as their child, and answering sufficient questions to prove that assertion true, shall the property be theirs.' That young man cannot swear, either through the *medium* of his *fingers* or his *pen*—it *must* be with his *tongue!*" Winona stood erect, her cheeks glowing, eyes brilliant and thin nostrils dilated.

Old Jake sat dazed; his mouth half open, as if some one had struck him a heavy blow. The others held their breath with interest. "Then I have here," Winona went on, holding up a slip of paper to view, "Teresa Hardeman's burial certificate from the hospital where she died, which is proof condemning the story you have told. Also according to the contract causing you to forfeit the money paid you in the beginning for telling to this young man, the secret of my brother's marriage, and placing him too, at the mercy of the law. Judge, you have heard the evidence on both sides of this question: I leave it to you to say what you think will be the result, should it be further agitated."

"It is a most remarkable case!" replied the judge with an impressive manner. "I have never heard of a similar one. I am sure, sir," he said, addressing old Jake, "that being smart enough to scheme as you have, you will readily see that every word you say will add an extra year to your life in the penitentiary. Both you and this young man with you,

whom you have suborned, are now at the mercy of these good people. It is for them to say what further shall be done."

Old Jake fell in a trembling heap upon the floor, clasping his hands towards Winona imploringly. George Hardeman rushed at him as if to strangle his life.

"Stop! don't touch him!" said Winona; "he is a worm in the dust; let him crawl there. Remember the Hardeman name—may it never know the stain of blood!"

George Hardeman stepped back, recognizing the superior judgment of Winona's cool reasoning. Aunt Sallie uttered not a word, leaving it all to Winona, in whom she had so much confidence.

"Get up," said Winona, addressing old Jake; "take this young man with you—go! spend the rest of your days on your knees, asking forgiveness for your sins, and teach him also to pray, as you have taught him to lie!"

At that, old Jake motioned to his colleague, who sat frightened and bewildered, knowing, by old Jake's manner, they had failed in their plan. The two together hurried out without a word, and disappeared, leaving no fear with Winona of their ever returning. The clock in the Court-house steeple tolled out the hour, reminding her of the yawn of a snoozing animal that half wakes but to close its eyes again, as she looked over the quiet, sleepy town, all unconscious of the important happenings, just

ended in its hall of justice. A few wagons and buggies stood before the small grocery stores. Here and there a group of men, who had come from the country to attend court, stood about in the court-yard talking on business. Several of them sat with their chairs tilted on hind legs, around the court-house door, smoking, chewing, or whittling a stick with a pocket knife, while laughing and telling jokes. They hushed suddenly, as Winona and the others came out, conjecturing and wondering among themselves after she had disappeared in the distance, as to 'what was up.' Her appearance furnished material for that day's talk alone, as she was not seen again, having returned immediately to the north with a light heart, and promising Aunt Sallie to bring her "Yankee husband" to see them all on her return from Europe in the fall.

CHAPTER XIII.

In all the glory of the Indian summer of her life's experience, Winona once more stood a bride. How queenly she looked! How happy she was! Lawrence at her side with his splendid physique and noble features, felt his heart leap with joy and pride.

"What a grand couple," said Mr. and Mrs. Gerade. "Both attractive and imposing in appearance, brilliant in mind, and thoroughly congenial at heart. They married for love alone, founded on good judgment. Would that the world could have more such unions!"

The rolling waves hugged the steamer passionately as Lawrence and Winona, with the circling sea-gulls about, sailed out to sea, into its mists—out of sight of land. That summer abroad to them was one of perfect enjoyment. Exultant in their love, with receptive and appreciative minds for the interesting and beautiful, they felt they were really *living*, and before had only existed. On their return to America in the fall, Lawrence said one morning: "Come, Winona, let's go up to West Point to-day. I hear the boys are to have a tilt,

and I want to see how my filly behaves herself. You know she came while you were South last spring, and I sent her up to one of my old friends at the Point to use until we came home from abroad. I want to bring her down to the city soon for you to ride; she has a splendid gait."

Winona and Lawrence, with many other pretty and fashionably-dressed women, and handsome officers in their attractive military uniforms, sat looking over the plane, where pranced the horses bearing the cadets who were to participate in the tournament.

"There she is just coming on!" said Lawrence, suddenly, as the bugle sounded.

Winona saw a dark, sleek horse, with slender limbs and high arched neck, bearing a cadet, who sat the saddle gracefully and rode a l'Anglaise.

"I'll wager Mett will cause her rider to make the best score, for she is well trained. Isn't she a beauty!" remarked Lawrence, enthusiastically.

What an old-time ring that name had in it for Winona. "How did you happen to name her Mett," she questioned.

"Why, that was her mother's name. It's quite a story. A near relative of mine, Dr. Shippen, who was in the Federal army, made her a present to me. The mother, he said, was taken from a little Southern girl who was a patient of his during the war. He had heard her beg so piteously for her pet. Some days after leaving her his horse was

shot, and the mother of my mare given him in place. Some time after, he wrote to the aunt of the child with whom she lived, telling her the horse was in his possession and at her disposal. Twice he wrote, but there came no answer—"

"The letters were never received; there was such confusion those days," interrupted Winona, with a little tone of sadness as her thoughts flew backward.

"Why, what do you mean, Winona? You look as if you had some personal interest in the matter."

"I have. I was Dr. Shippen's little Southern girl patient, and *Mett* was *my* pet horse."

Lawrence gazed in surprise at Winona, saying:

"Isn't it all so strange and romantic! It does, indeed, seem that God intended us for each other from the beginning. Our lives have been so interlinked."

"Dr. Shippen has had much to do with my life, though I have never seen him since that time when I lay ill with the fever. Indeed, I owe my existence to-day to him. I would have died had it not been for his medicine and instructions. Had not it been for his tenderness and Gen. McPherson's kindness, I might not have loved *you* so well," said Winona, with a smile, and teasing tone in her voice. "Whenever I felt a touch of bitterness when thinking of brother Dan's death," she went on more seriously, "I always pacified it by thinking of those two good men."

"How happy I am that I am to be the one to restore your pet to you," said Lawrence, in a low, tender voice, while gently pressing her hand.

Mett's rider did, indeed, make the best score, coming out at the last round amid shouts of applause, fluttering of handkerchiefs, waving of parasols, and clapping of daintily-gloved hands. When the tilt was over, Winona went to Mett, and stood stroking and patting her silken mane. The horse looked at her knowingly from great liquid eyes, and put out her nose caressingly towards Winona, who had the same magnetic influence over animals she possessed with people.

"You are in truth, the image of my own, old pet!" she said, resting her cheek affectionately against Mett's neck, and looking far away up the blue Hudson, as if listening to something in the distance, saying to herself: "I can hear Mr. Simpkins say—'come, Winona, let's go t' mill now, fur they mought stop grindin' soon." The banks of the river before her loomed up in all their grandeur. A tiny white sail appeared in the bend, reminding her of a white feather dropped from an angel's wing being wafted down the blue heavens. "No matter how happy one's present is," she thought, "their dead past always brings a touch of sadness."

On their return to the city, Winona and Lawrence found a letter from Jean, saying,—"Mr. Le Blanc and I are to be married soon. We want you to

come to the wedding. He will call and tell you all about it."

"Ah, I believed that would be the ending," said Winona, happy at the thought. "I've guessed it from her letters. How nice it will be to have her live here where we can see her often. It is so strengthening to be associated with such a woman."

After attending Jean and Mr. Le Blanc's wedding, Winona and Lawrence went to pay Aunt Sallie the promised visit. It was such a sweet, peaceful rest to them after the rush and whirl of gay city life. Grandma hobbled about, shading her dimmed eyes with her hand to see what was going on, or sat quietly knitting by the fireside, asking childish questions like most old people. 'She liked Lawrence a great deal better than she thought she would;' he always humored her by talking of the war—her pet subject of conversation. "Poor, dear, old soul," he said, in speaking of her to Winona. "You can see how much she lives in the past, 'before the war,' as she says—the sunny side of her life."

"Hiah am Banni, come t' see ye," said Cindy, now, old and gray-headed, still faithful to her "missus," coming in one day, preceding a stout colored woman.

"Is dis my little 'Noni," said the latter, turning her head wrapped with a red bandanna, quizzically to one side. "Lorddy mussy on my soul, ef it ain't!" she said, falling on her knees before Winona,

and catching her in her arms, the tears rolling down her black cheeks. "Yer nebber hab furgot me nary Christmus yit, since yer ben gone. Yer dunno how I does lub you, Miss Noni. Yer mus' lemme call yer Miss "Noni," lak I uster. I kaint nebber member all dese hifalutin names." Winona held her black hand in hers and choked back the tears as she said: "We had great times when we were little, didn't we Banni—popping corn over the hot coals and telling fairy stories. It has been a long time since then, but we love each other still, and always will!"

Lawrence stood by looking on the scene with a surprised interest. He had never witnessed such an one before, and was peculiarly touched. "How I wish," he said to himself, "that many of my people could see this, as I do."

Before their return north, Winona and Lawrence stopped a few weeks in Atlanta to see the old friends of her school days there.

"Who is that genial looking man to whom you spoke then," questioned Lawrence, as they stood in the arcade of the Kimball House, looking at the crowds of people, who had come to welcome President and Mrs. Cleveland to the city.

"That was Henry W. Grady. I was introduced and had a pleasant interview with him, while you were away this morning. To me, he is the Star of Bethlehem that has risen in our southern sky to lead wise men to the right understanding of those vital

questions so necessary to the prosperity, not only of our south-land, but this entire great republic."

That afternoon an invation came for "Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence De Movil" with Mr. Grady's card enclosed, inviting them to the reception to be given that evening in honor of President and Mrs. Cleveland at the Capital City Club. They decided to accept.

"Drive us," said Lawrence to the coachman, "to the Capital City Club." A short ride brought them to a halt before a large building brilliantly illuminated.

"What house is that, with its white columns," said Winona, addressing the footman, as she stepped out of the carriage and gave a glance around by the moonlight.

"The Leyden House," madame, he answered.

"Why, Lawrence, this club house stands on the very spot where was the house in which I was born! It was my dear grandpa's home; he died here. How full is my life of coincidences! You know General Thomas had his headquarters there in the Leyden House, during the war, and my grandpa's house here was used for private rooms and printing offices of the federal generals, at the time Atlanta was destroyed. I have often heard grandpa talk about it. What a splendid city has been built here since that time!"

"Who is that gaudily dressed woman, with rouged cheeks, blackened eyebrows, blondined

hair, and a great spot of black court-plaster on her face?" questioned a lady of her companion, while standing near Winona that evening.

"Why, that is Laura Wilkins—shoddy—used to have money—spends all she has now on dress for show—so vain—listen how loudly she talk—likes to make herself conspicuous; she's stage-struck; affects the actress—gossiping is her forte—takes with the men; but, none seem to care for her for a wife—dying to get married; when she does, she won't need the assistance of a father or brother to give her away. Dare say she'll walk up the aisle alone with head erect, looking as if ready to shout palms of victory, 'I have won!' Pity her husband. I guess he'll be a simpleton, or coarse natured"—were some of the severe criticisms Winona, heard whispered from behind a gauze fan. A little later, Laura Wilkins came up to Winona, saying in a most patronizing way: "Why, Winona Hardeman,—Mrs. De Movil as I now hear you are; how delighted I am to see you! How well you are looking! What a swell looking fellow you have for a husband; he's a regular daisy—wouldn't mind making a mash like that myself."

"Poor thing!" said Winona to herself, when Laura had finished her slangy chatter and turned away. "How she stabbed my little heart a long time ago by laughing at my copper toed shoes, and how I wondered why it was her money made her so much better than I; why I was slighted at her

party, and I have not comprehended many of the "whys" and "wherefores" of the ways of the world yet! Women like Laura Wilkins always make me sad. They spend their lives struggling,—fawning on society and die—forgotten!"

As the many elegantly dressed people promenaded under the brilliant lights, chatting to the accompaniment of the orchestra, admiring the elaborate decorations, and paying their respects to President Cleveland and his beautiful wife, Winona stood apart in an unobserved corner for a little while.

"Why are you so quiet, my sweet one," said her husband, looking affectionately into her face.

"I was only closing my eyes to this festive scene for a moment, and looking backward. Just about here was the old parlor—I can see its black hair furniture now; the tall china vases on the mantel with stiff bunches of flowers painted on them; the pictures of Generals Lee and Jackson in there confederate uniforms hanging on the whitewashed walls, and dear grandpa sitting there, toddling me on his knee."

When their visit was ended, Winona and Lawrence turned again their faces northward.

"And now, that we are nearing home, to take up life in earnest together, "said Winona, as they rode along," I pray earnestly, my dear husband, that our union may be a grand success to the end! That you will live well your part, I know. I shall try so hard to be to you all that a good and loving wife

can. We are both full of vigor, happy, wealthy—we ought to be of great value to the world under such favorable circumstances. For my part, after complying with the demands of my own home, I shall give my time, strength and money to the cause of woman. I show no partiality, for, by uplifting her, man cannot fail to be elevated. I hope some day to establish a school where talented women are about me ; women who are trying to help themselves, can have every advantage of art and science, and higher education gratuitously. Then, I shall aid in every way I can in founding and supporting libraries with healthy reading matter. Bad books are one of the great evils of this modern time. They have such power to disease one's mind. (Show me the style of books one reads, and I can almost tell you the character of that one without knowing him personally.) Were I a man, my vote would surely be cast to abolish their publication. Men who sell them, deal in death just as much as does the fat saloon keeper. How I wish for the gift of a mighty pen ! How with the power of brilliant word-painting would I dip it in the blackest ink, and write with a bold hand, books that would survive the century ! "

They had arrived at Jersey City, and stood on the wharf waiting for the ferry to take them over the river to New York. It was night. Lawrence De Movil tenderly pressed Winona's hand. "What a grand woman you are, my queen ! he said—"You

lift me up until I feel tenfold stronger in my better purposes!"

The ferry bearing them over, moved off. Its light was soon lost amid the many others that shone through the thick fog of the river.

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A few years later, finds Lawrence DeMovil the honored Minister Plenipotentiary to one of the most important foreign countries. His wife is the pride and joy of the Legation, and there is no lady at Court, those who wear the "crown jewels" not excepted, upon whom is bestowed more deference and love, than Winona.

THE END.

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